

FORMA SACRA,
OR, A
SACRED PLATFORM
Geo M^c OF Donald
NATURAL and REVEALED RELIGION;
EXHIBITING,

A SCRIPTUAL and Rational ACCOUNT
OF *these three* IMPORTANT HEADS,

- 1st. Of Creation and that, both in its eternal Causes and Springs in the DEITY; and in the wonderful Divine Procedure in the Six Day's Work
- 2^{dly}. Of the whole complex eternal Plan of Divine Predestination, comprehending the great Events relative to Angels and Men.
- 3^{dly}. Of the wise Divine Procedure in accomplishing each Part of this whole eternal Plan.

BY THE PIOUS AND LEARNED
THOMAS BLACKWELL, *K*

TO WHICH IS NOW ADDED,

AN INTRODUCTION,

Pointing out, the Expediency, Propriety and Utility of Re-printing said Book in this our Day, when pure and undefiled Religion appears to be so much on the decline among Professors of all Denominations in this flourishing AMERICAN WORLD.

BY SIMON WILLIAMS, A. M.
Minister of the Gospel in Windham in N. Hampshire.

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M DCC LXXIV



DEDICATION.

To the SUBSCRIBERS,
WHO HAVE TASTED THAT THE
LORD IS GRACIOUS,

THIS FOLLOWING NEW EDITION OF
THE PIOUS AND LEARNED

THOMAS BLACKWELL'S
Book on genuine revealed Religion,
is humbly inscribed by

a SERVANT of the

LORD JESUS CHRIST.

S. W.



An
INTRODUCTION,
humbly addressed to the
SUBSCRIBERS
of the following new Edition of
Mr. BLACKWELL'S
BOOK On
genuine revealed Religion.

***** AS the following excellent treasure of
— the precious truths of God, revealed
* | W | * in the sacred scriptures, for the reco-
— very of fallen man, and by the pious
***** author digested and composed, into a
brief, clear and comprehensive view, only to be
perused by those who have tasted that the Lord is
gracious; I would not be so much inclined as I
now find myself to be to enlarge this book, by the
addition of any thing, that can drop from my pen.
The readiness which I observed in many to pro-
mote the re printing of the book. on reading the
proposals, induce me to think, many of you stand
in need of no argument, or address from me to
chuse the most tranquil hours, and most seasonable
opportunities

opportunities, carefully to peruse the same. Beside, it is observable, by several very respectable names in the subscription list, that the book will fall into the hands of some, who have the advantage of a learned and liberal education, fitting them to read, not only Mr. BLACKWELL's treatise, but also, the many elaborate performances of the excellent of the earth, who in all ages of the christian *Æra*, by the gracious providence of almighty God, have been raised up, from time to time, as defenders of the faith deliver'd to the saints. Did I pretend by this Introduction, to instruct persons of this class, it would be discovering an arrogance, which it becomes me at all times to avoid.

But, when I consider, that this treatise may fall into the hands of many, who at first view, cannot discover its excellencies; I must beg leave to drop a few thoughts, respecting the expediency, propriety and utility of introducing this author into the habitations of the American world.

That there is a very glorious work of God, often foretold in scripture, which in the progress and issue of it, shall renew the world of mankind, is a truth that will not be denied by any acquainted with the bible, which is the only rule to direct us in our faith and practice. Every attempt then of man, that has a tendency to display the excellency of the sacred scripture, and to set in a clear view this truth, in its connection with the wonderful works of the Supreme Being, from the beginning to the end of time, will not only meet with the candid reception of all, who are not tinctured with the infernal passion of envy; but will be favoured with the protection of that blessed Being, who banished Lucifer and all his adherents from the bright regions of glory, and plunged them into the horrid abyss of their own darkness.

The world, it must be acknowledged is full of books, and more are daily coming from the press,

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The DEDICATION. ▼

press, which is a good argument to prove the expediency of giving my author a place among the innumerable many ; especially, if my candid reader will seriously consider the signs of the times, and remember that we are now living in the latter days.

In these days the apostle Peter informs the church in general of a few things, which it behooveth professing christians (of every denomination in America) most seriously to consider.

He informs us of great defection among the churches of Christ ; great deadness and formality among real saints ; some professors staining the glory of the Redeemer by corrupt doctrines ; false teachers, who privily bring in damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them ; scoffers walking after their own lusts, and making a mock of solid piety.

If christians then, in this present day, live in the midst of such deplorable defection, it cannot be improper to present my reader with a book, so well calculated to display the precious doctrine of saving grace, which is in this day almost buried by a rapid flood and inundation of pernicious errors, producing also, an infectious moral conduct, which the more pious and judicious of every denomination are ready to bear testimony against, as being destructive of that harmony and union that should subsist both in church and state.

God, who is infinitely wise in council, hath appointed all things both in church and state, from the beginning to the end ; but these appointments are not to be accomplished without means, and when we reflect on methods which he hath taken in the past periods of his church, to remove her burdens, restore her freedom, to scatter her darkness and renew her light ; to destroy the inventions of men, and to display his own glory ; we must acknowledge, that his ways are not man's ways, nor his thoughts man's thoughts.

As I have confined myself to a very narrow compass

in this introduction, I shall say no more respecting the expediency and propriety of re-printing this book, but hasten to point out the utility thereof, to the various classes of readers, high or low, rich or poor, who live in this present day, conscious of the immortality of their souls and a future state.

But before I do this, I beseech my reader to reflect a little, (and it is but a little, the most wise among men can know,) wherein the Sovereign Ruler of the universe differs from the sons of men : And as I now address myself to the most penetrating and sagacious of my readers, (in this particular instance,) that I may not intrude my own thoughts, I shall record here, some very striking sentiments, of a celebrated writer, which, if calmly considered, will not fail equally to solemnize as please the learned and judicious.

“ God that sitteth in the highest heavens, holds
 “ the reins of all kingdoms ; he hath all hearts
 “ in his hands ; sometimes he restrains the passions,
 “ sometimes again, he lets them loose at full rage,
 “ and by that he stirs up all mankind. Is he pleased
 “ to make conquerors ? He causes a dread to march
 “ before them, and at the same time inspires them
 “ and their followers with an uncommon boldness,
 “ and heroic fortitude. Is he pleased to make new
 “ legislators, he sends them his spirit of wisdom
 “ and foresight, he causes them to prevent the evils
 “ which threaten the common wealth, and so
 “ lay the foundations of public tranquility.

“ He knows that human wisdom is always short
 “ in some places ; he enlightens it, he opens the
 “ eyes of the understanding ; at other times abandons
 “ them to their own ignorance ; He blends
 “ the judgment, he precipitates it, and confounds
 “ it with itself ; human wisdom is perplexed and
 “ embarrassed with its own subtilties, and its own
 “ precautions are so many snares to it.

“ God by these means exercises his fearful judgments according to the rules of his justice, which

“are always infallible. It is God alone that prepares effects in the most distant causes, and who strikes those fatal blows that reach so far. When he is pleased to let go the latter, to overturn empires, every thing is weak and irregular in their councils. A people formerly sagacious may stagger and totter, and be as it were besotted, because the Lord hath shed a spirit of dizziness and confusion upon them. But that men may not herein be deceived, God re-unites when he seeth good, the straggling senses, and he that insulted over the blindness of others, falls himself into more Egyptian darkness, and oftentimes without any thing else to confound his senses and understanding, than his too long prosperities.

Thus it is that God reigneth over all people.

I come now to point out the utility of the following treatise, to the professors of our holy religion in this and the neighbouring provinces.

It cannot be denied by any person, who is acquainted with the history of this new American world, that God, who rules over all kingdoms and nations, hath remarkably displayed hitherto his great power and wisdom on this vast continent, by the various emigrations of the sons and daughters of men, from those places, where the reformation of his church, that was once sunk in anti-christian darkness, began to receive the first fruits of that meridian glory, which in the book of God, is so often promised shall come to pass in such a conspicuous manner, as to fill the whole earth with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the seas. Nor can it be denied, that in the early days of this transplantation, this NEW-ENGLAND territory hath been favoured with much precious seed from the old country. Heroes come from afar, who were clothed with the spirit of true patriotism; some sagaciously and with the spirit of council regulating the body politic, and others building

building up the walls of Zion, by propagating the pure and undefiled principles of christianity. The annals of NEW-ENGLAND are pregnant with testimonies of this kind, which clearly point out, that the spirit of civil policie, with which she has so evidently been endowed, from her first rise to her present growing maturity, hath been graciously given to her from Heaven, that her sons may learn, that this growing empire is necessarily connected with the history of the people of God; and that the great mystery, which the holy spirit revealed to St. *John*, is a mystery in which America is, and in a special manner NEW ENGLAND ought now, and it is probable will be much concerned

How many christian heroes are now lying in her dust? The spirits of these just men are waiting for these future times, which God hath promised, when he will deliver his church from these doubts and difficulties, that in this day possess the minds of many; which together with the contentions and division that subsist in NEW-ENGLAND, among professors of one common christianity, are some of the chief obstacles in the way of the spread of pure and undefiled religion among us.

The following platform is a concise plan of these genuine truths, which were first propagated in the infant state of the NEW-ENGLAND churches breathing the same spirit of those pious witnesses, who were when alive, cloathed in sackcloth for the testimony of Jesus; and until there be a resurrection of this spirit in the succeeding preachers of the everlasting gospel, more universally than it now appears; I fear the growing glory of this new empire in all its political grandeur; (which may the Lord of heaven and earth long continue) I fear I say, this glory will get a stop, until the clergy of all denominations, and their societies over which they are ordained, come to be more unanimous in the fundamentals of our gospel salvation.

When

The DEDICATION. ix

When I consider the sacred function to which a gracious God has been pleased to call me, and that it is my office not only to deliver his messages to the particular flock committed to my care, but also to throw in my mite for promoting the spread of pure religion among the churches of our Lord Jesus Christ, in these parts ; I hope I am not out of the path of duty, when I now attempt to point out some of the special benefits which may be received by the following short treatise, coming into the hands of so many professing christians.

This book may be useful, if carefully perused, not only to those who have neither leisure to read, nor perhaps ability to buy the works of the learned in larger volumes ; but even to those who have both ; for it appears, that the very form of it hath been planned by the learned and judicious author for persons of the most liberal education, who have gone through the whole circle of science, and by that means whetted their intellectual powers to reason and meditate on the deepest points of natural and revealed religion ; at the same time the arguments are placed in so clear a point of light, as to adapt them to common capacities. In this point of view, I am in hopes it will give a check to the growing contagion of deism among the polished and liberally educated youth of this rising generation.

There are no doubt, many in this present age, that are poisoned with the infection of deism, only for want of a proper antidote, which can't be readily obtained without reading large volumes. Now in this author, (in the very beginning of his book, which treats of the eternal causes and springs of creation in the Deity,) they will find that the soundest philosophy, which the human mind by the light of nature is capable of receiving, can be only as a handmaid, ushering into the mind the knowledge of the pure revelation of the eternal son of God, who for us men, and our salvation came down from heaven. Here

Here they will find, that natural religion, separated from what God has been pleased to reveal at sundry times, and in divers manners by his prophets, and last of all by his own son and his holy apostles, here I say they will find, that natural religion thus separated will stand them in no stead for solid happiness, either in time or eternity; but on the contrary you have in this book the clearest dictates of reason, concurring with the scripture account, to shew, that without faith in, and union to the holy Jesus, the deist's soul, with all his acquired knowledge, is stripped naked, deprived of the image of God, and forever miserable, except renewed by his holy spirit.

This is not the only advantage that may be received from the perusal of my author.

There are some writers of a liberal education in the present day, as well as in days past, who have made a great noise against our Lord's satisfaction in the name and room of sinners. These poisonous and subtle essays are scattered from the press, and put into the hands of many not fortified with skill or ability to unravel the sophistry. This book then will be very useful to counteract this poison; for though my judicious author does not lead his reader into the intangled mazes of dry and knotty controversy; yet he sweetly and skillfully lays before you the great truth, shewing you in what manner it is opposed by Socinus and his followers.

Our author's excellency will appear to the sagacious reader, when he peruses the ninth chapter; for there he has selected a few of the most solid arguments that hitherto have been made use of, by former writers in clearing up this important point of doctrine, and sets them in so plain a light, that the unprejudiced can no longer doubt that there is any thing unreasonable or unjust in *Adam* being appointed the moral head and representative of all his posterity.

I would

I would now draw to a conclusion, was it not that I see how this book is calculated to be of more extensive use than what I have already mentioned.

Give me leave then only to ask a question, the solution of which, I shall let rest in the breast of my reader.

Are there not many in these provinces, as well as other parts of the christian world, who would be ashamed, if they were seriously asked, to own themselves the followers of *James Arminius*, and at the same time, imbibe his doctrines only because they have not yet seen them in a true point of light?

This book then destroys that soul-ruining error also, and convinces all of unprejudiced reason, that there is no power naturally in any man previous to regeneration, upon the highest moral suasion, to enable him to perform the least holy action as it respects his salvation in the sight of God.

Thus have I performed my promise to the subscribers of this new edition of genuine religion.

Section

Section II.

I would be wanting in a necessary part of my duty, if I by not preparing our author for the press, had not resited the important applications of some pious and judicious persons who have told me, they prefer the book as a legacy in their hands to leave to their children at their death ; being in their esteem, more excellent than the fleeting treasure of silver ; and indeed it is truly more precious than apples of gold in pictures of silver ; for if our children, and others of the rising generation carefully peruse the same, they will in this book, not only see the faith of all pious parents truly delineated ; but must also be rationally convinced, that without this faith it is impossible as moral agents to please God. It may then not be improper in the winding up this introduction, to conclude all I shall now say, by a short address to the youth of my parish, in conjunction with all others of the same age, into whose hands God in his providence will be pleased to send this volume.

BELOVED YOUTH,

As certain as mankind is superior to the brute creation, so certain we shall find after death a future existence, and in that state be the subjects of a righteous retribution ; for thus saith the divine oracle. *It is appointed for all men once to die, and after death the judgment, and again, The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.*

Come then gentle reader, male or female, who hitherto have had but little time to consider how fear-
fully

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fully and wonderfully you are made; come and contemplate with me for a few moments, concerning your mysterious compound of body and soul, of matter and spirit.

In this view I am to shew you what perhaps you have never yet seriously thought of: I am to shew you, that your composition as a human being was formed not merely for time, but principally for eternity; not only to glorify your creator as a moral agent on this earth, which is only his footstool; but also to display his divine perfections in heaven, which is the throne of his majesty.

That you may be persuaded of this important truth, in which you yourselves are particularly concerned, consider a little, as a rational being, what you are made capable to discover of the works of creation; say not that you have no learning, and that you are unable to follow me in this meditation; if you can read your mother-tongue you are capable to comprehend these plain truths, which I would now lay before you for your better information.

You can observe, no doubt, that the visible things of God in the creation are various, and that you yourselves are a part of the same. You can observe, that some of these things are wholly void of all knowledge, as the elements, the earth, air, water and fire, and every thing without life that is compounded of them; to these you may add, the innumerable tribes of the vegetable kingdom, all which, by a certain natural proneness, are carried to those things which suit their state, without any antecedent sense or knowledge of that which is suitable to them. Let us now call this a natural appetite. By this power stones, and whatever have weight sink downwards, and light things ascend upwards. By this appetite also, plants draw their moisture from the earth.

You

You can observe also, there are other things endowed with knowledge, and those will appear to you, on a little consideration, to be of three kinds.

The first class, we shall take notice of, are those things which are endowed only with sense, whose office it is to be wholly engaged about gross and material bodies, in such a manner, as shews them creatures unable to make much use of comparison or similitude, so as to see that order and connection, which are in the things themselves; hence it is, that the office of these creatures is confined within very narrow limits; to this rank of beings you must acknowledge all beasts do belong, all which are endowed with propensities known and distinguished by these names, of animal appetite; for this appetite is that power whereby the living creature pursues or avoids that which is explored and discovered by sense.

There are other beings which are so furnished with the excellency and purity of intellect, or rational understanding, as to have nothing corporeal or of material composition in their nature; which kind of beings, the sacred scriptures teach us to call by the name of angels; these incorporeal and intelligent spirits, are endowed with a certain simple appetite, which is properly called their will.

The third kind of beings are those which are furnished by the bountiful Lord and creator of the material and intellectual systems, with the gifts both of sense and understanding: Now this is that rank of beings to which you belong; you are a part of mankind, a member of human society, placed in the moral world to act as a person superior to the brute creation, agreeable to these moral powers with which beyond theirs you are endowed. As a being then of this superior make, you can perceive, not only by animal sense, that which is the gross composition of material bodies; but also, by the excellency of your reason and superior understanding

standing

standing, or in other words, by the gift of your intellectual genius, you are furnished with powers to take notice of that order and fitness, which result from corporeal objects in their various relations and dependences one on another. Beside, by the power of this genius, which you have, and which the brutes have not, you are made capable to penetrate into things altogether void of matter, and no way falling under, or subject to the cognizance of sense.

See now the difference there is between your nature and the inferior creatures. You see you have a capacity to pursue those things of which brute animals are wholly incapable; and let me tell you, that if you carefully attend to your own feelings, you will find yourself to be a little world, an actual partaker of all those things, which are included in the vast system of the created universe; for as among all the creatures of God, whether animate or inanimate, we can discover only three appetites, a natural, a sensitive and rational, so in yourself, you may find all these propensities; for by your natural appetite, which includes hunger and thirst, you find yourself a partaker of that which is common to the vegetable creation. By your animal appetite, which engages you to pursue the gratifications of sense, you find yourself a partaker of the same nature with the brutes of the field, and by your rational appetite you find, you are a partaker of the nature of those spirits who are the subjects of God's moral world. Your capacity then is vastly superior to that of the brute kind; for the knowledge of gross material bodies is only granted to their senses, of which the animal appetite is the sole companion; hence it is, that the brutes, who have only this as their highest excellency, employ all their care in pursuing the advantages and benefits which result from the gratifications of their animal nature. But you are better furnished; for you have in your immortal nature a rational appetite

tite to the companion of your reasonable mind, and is known by the denomination of that remarkable term called the will of man ; whose office it is to follow right reason wherever it leads, and constantly to obey her invariable dictates. But now, my dear youth, I must direct you to compare your own experience with the word of him who said, *Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God* ; for originally this will, under the conduct of a divine light bestowed on the human understanding was endowed with a superior taste, a taste of which the brute creation have not the least feeling, a taste which is now viciated and lost by the dreadful fall ; a taste which can never be recovered but by regeneration. I have wrote this address purely to prepare you to read my author's tenth chapter, where you will be convinced, that no vital act can rise higher than the nature and power of the principle from which it proceedeth, and consequently man in his fallen state, unregenerate man can only produce acts bearing proportion to the vegetative, animal and merely rational life.

As my author hath not touched this subject, as it respects the distinction of appetites, I hope you will find this part of my introduction to be proper and useful ; also remember then the dignity of your nature when compared to the brute creation, for though in your fallen state, your soul being destitute of regeneration, is deprived of true spiritual taste ; yet this will or rational appetite, of which our intellect or understanding is the inseparable companion, are powers belonging to that part of our composition which is a spiritual substance incorporeal and immortal.

If you ask me what this spiritual substance is, I only desire you to observe what you feel within you ; is there not something in you, which *thinks, reflects and deliberates* ; something which *determines*

mines, which doubts, which consents and denies ; something that wills, demurs, resolves, chuses and rejects ; something that receives various sensations from outward objects, and produces voluntary motions in several parts of your body. Know then that these powers of thinking, willing and perceiving are not in the matter which compose your body ; for mere matter can never produce thought. If then these powers are not in the matter of your body, they must arise from something which is void of matter, now this something is your immortal soul or spirit.

I appeal once more to your feelings ; have you not a natural desire for immortality ? You say yes. This desire then supposes a natural capacity in the subject, wherein that desire resides ; and therefore, since your soul desires immortality it is capable of it, and also must perceive that it is so.

Have you never perceived in yourself a consciousness of guilt, and an uneasy concern at the prospect of things to come ? You say yes. Now whence can this concern arise, if your soul sees not an immortality beyond this life.

Be convinced then and persuaded, that there is a vast difference between your soul and the souls of brutes. The brutes are no moral agents ; have no consciousness of guilt ; have no prospect of futurity, and are wholly confined to the transitory things of time and sense.

Now, may God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shine more and more into our hearts, to give us the continual light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

A M E N.

B

ADVERTISEMENT.

ACCORDING to my promise in my printed proposals, I have made diligent enquiry after my author's life and writings; at present can only inform you, that I have received a letter from a gentleman of veracity and extensive knowledge in the literary world, which informs me, that the reverend, pious and learned Mr. THOMAS BLACKWELL, was predecessor to the Reverend Doctor WITHERSPOON, who is now president of the college in the Jerseys, and was before he was called to America, a minister of the gospel in Peasly North-Britain, where Mr. BLACKWELL was much esteemed.



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To the Right Honourable
LORDS of COUNCIL and SESSION,
Sir HUGH DALRYMPLE
LORD PRESIDENT,
And the other LORDS Ordinary
and Extraordinary.

My Lords,

THE following treatise being to discourse the rational World, upon the great subject of true revealed religion ; and being designed to shew that men of the greatest sense and reason may upon the most solid grounds profess, and avouch the same, as the religion of all others in the world, most consonant unto the divine nature, persons and perfections and most adjusted unto the rational, moral, and immortal nature and quality of the human soul ; I say, considering these things, I could not but presently see how just a claim the most honourable and judicious society of the senators of the college of Justice, had unto the dedication thereof.

And certainly, considering the all-wise God to be the author of revealed religion, as what the undeniable characters of the divinity of the holy scriptures doth evidently confirm ; and withal considering how seasonably and powerfully, the very first intimation of the said religion in the garden did relieve and restore

store, guilty, trembling, and confounded man ; it must infallibly be something else than true and solid reason that will ever set up, and argue against so glorious a contrivance of infinite wisdom ; or decry and contemn so gracious a remedy proposed by infinite love ;

More especially seeing none of mankind can reasonably claim, either, a more knowing ancestor, to judge in religion, nor can naturally pretend unto a safer state and condition, than what were to be found with our first parents ; who yet most cordially embraced revealed religion, and thereupon immediately had the great storm in their conscience turned into a calm.

And therefore, beyond all controversy, it must be the great wisdom and interest of all sensible rational men, cordially to embrace the principles, and obey the precepts of this religion ; immediately revealed by the deity from heaven : More especially seeing it must be granted : that if God, had not thus determined true and saving religion immediately from himself ; the certain way unto the great salvation, had never been known in this lower world : All which is evident to a demonstration from the multiplicity of opinions about religion, among the innumerable professing sects ; who yet at the same time do all equally pretend unto true and solid reason.

However after all, it being still to be acknowledged, that true and genuine reason, in its principles and dictates is a most noble perfection ; and that no doctrine really contradictory unto the same, can ever be expected to be cordially embraced, by the rational, human soul ; therefore leaving the more general abstract reasonings in favours of revealed religion ; the following discourses are designed, particularly to consider, the several grand fundamental truths and doctrines contained therein ; which are so much quarrelled by great pretenders

tenders to reason in this our day : That so by making a scriptural, rational account of the same, our glorious and holy religion, may (by the divine blessing) come to be more and more in reputation amongst all ranks of persons, but especially amongst such whose great quality, parts and influence, render them capable of making our Lord, and revealed religion, more and more glorious in the world : To have sincerely and zealously accomplished which will certainly be the wish of the greatest of souls, amongst the children of men in the solemn day of accounts.

To all which I shall only subjoin, that when I considered, the great defender of the faith, whom an all-wise God so wonderfully reserved, for such a time as this, to raise up upon the throne of Great-Britain ; together with the wise and steady counsels and determinations of our greatest judicatures, in favour of the truths, and great interests, of the reformed religion : And finally when I call to mind the auspicious appearances of providence in this our day ; in giving rise (under the royal favour and countenance of our most gracious Queen) unto societies for the propagation of christian knowledge ; consisting of members whose faithfulness, prudence and honour promise great things that way : I say, upon all these ; I could not but see very great encouragement for appearing in this small essay towards the advancement of so good and great designs.

That a gracious God may remarkably return all the good services done by your lordships in favours of this national church ; and may greatly reward, your countenancing any essay of this kind shall be the serious prayer of,

MY LORDS,

Your Lordships

Most faithful, most obedient

And much obliged Servant

THO. BLACKWELL.

The Preface to the Reader.

THE very light of nature proclaiming the Deity to be the alone proper author, and sole dictator in the matter of *religion* ; it cannot thereupon be denied, but that the *religion* which in its principles, precepts and promises is most adjusted unto the glory of the Deity, and the *good* of the rational religious creature. must, certainly of all others plead most strongly for being reputed *genuine* :

And therefore considering how much our holy *revealed christian religion* declareth the infinite *wisdom* of God, in reconciling justice and mercy upon mans sin and fall : And how clearly it proclaimeth the infinite *love* and *goodness* of God in giving himself, his son, his spirit, grace and glory even unto sinful rebellious man ; and withal considering how greatly it demonstrateth the *infinite power* of God in raising a dead elect world unto spiritual life ; commanding light out of darkness, love out of enmity. and life out of death : Certainly, as no religion can pretend to advance the glory of the divine perfections more, so thereupon none can have such a just claim to be accounted the *real contrivance* of the Deity, as what our revealed religion hath.

Again, if we shall reflect upon revealed religion, as declaring the *father's* loving and decreeing ; the *Son's* obeying in our nature, dying and redeeming ; the *Holy Ghost's* applying the Son's purchased redemption, according to the eternal counsels of the father ; behold how much the glorious *economy* of the adorable trinity in their order

der of substance and operation, is also most accurately consulted in this scheme of the christian religion, so that to suppose any other author unto this religion, than the Deity, is certainly to speak contrary to reason.

And as to what concerneth its *agreeableness* unto the rational powers and faculties of the human soul; and its consulting man's *greatest* and *best interests*; let us consider first the great *reasonableness* of the terms, upon which this religion offereth salvation: Seeing it only requireth our cordial choosing and embracing the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lord our *portion*; our *righteousness* and *lawgiver*: Is it, I say, possible upon these, that *poor guilty corrupt* man can in reason, so much as once open his mouth to declaim against such excellent and table terms?

It is true, *religion* finds man altogether *dead* in trespasses and sins, and absolutely *impotent* to any spiritual good; but as certain it is on the other hand, that *revealed religion* declareth to man that God *knows* his impotency, and that he never *expects* from one of *Adam's* race, his turning himself. *John* 6. 44. and thereupon most graciously *directs* man to acknowledge his inability to lift up his voice for a day of almighty power, and so to continue waiting in the use of appointed means, till it please the *Holy Ghost* to infuse spiritual life; upon which the man is enabled for saving faith, repentance and new obedience.

I know that some men upon design to overturn the whole of revealed religion, have contrived to tell us, that the *history* of the *fall* of the first *Adam*, as opening a door for the redemption wrought by the second, is all, but mere *sham*, and *allegory* without any reality therein.

But I am confident, that before any sensible, judicious person will in the least blasphemously entertain any thought that way, they will first expect that the rational world should hear some *real inconsistency*

consistency and *contradiction* to be in the said context unto *solid reason*; which is impossible. For,

Was it not in Satan's power being an *intelligent spirit*, to improve the *sagacious*, beautiful and innocent *serpent* for getting the temptation once proposed? Yea did he not act a most wise part in thus *crouching down* and incorporating himself with an *unjealous creature*? Again, was not the temptation of *vast increase* of knowledge and of becoming like God, greatly adjusted to the intelligent *rational* human soul? Yea was it not the temptation which had prevailed with the fallen angels themselves? As also was it not managed with the greatest *subtily*? Satan giving the dreaded threatening a most *cunning turn*, in affirming that God was more afraid of their eating that extraordinary fruit, than what they had ground to be themselves. So that upon the whole I make bold to say, that considering *man*, was-(in the depth of wisdom) left to the freedom of his own will, there is not a more *rational* or *accountable* passage in the whole of divine history, than what that of the fall of mutable and fallable man is: All which I hope in the ensuing treatise will be made most evident; which *difficulty* I have the rather touched at in the preface, because once remove the *fall* of man, the whole of revealed religion at the same time is dissolved along with it.

But after all, knowing that it is not any *general assertions* of the reasonableness of revealed religion, without a *particular consideration* and *clearance* of those doctrines principally quarrelled by *pretenders to reason* in our day that will give satisfaction; therefore, that the *reader* without further, may have access to peruse the following discourses, I conclude all, heartily praying that an all-wise God the author of knowledge and reason, may be graciously pleased, to make the professing world more

truly

truly and solidly rational, by illuminating and sanctifying the human mind : And then no doubt *reason* will cordially acknowledge an infallibility in all the divine dictates and most mysterious doctrines of revealed religion.

CHAPTER

C H A P T E R I.

GOD's being the creator of the world, Angels and Men, the first great article of the christian creed, laying foundation for religion. The eternal causes and springs of creation in the Deity, considered and declared. As, 1. God by reason of his eternity, independency, self-sufficiency, finds himself and the, divine glory perfectly secure against all possible reflections or events from the creation. 2dly. There being found in the God-head, a trinity of persons, with a distinct order of substance, making way for a distinct order of operation: Thereupon there are found a glorious creator, a gracious redeemer, and an almighty executor; whereby the creation is fully provided for, both as to its original glorious state, and its subsequent lapsed condition. 3dly. All the glorious, divine, communicable and incommunicable perfections, do also join in their voice for creation; as tending so much unto the advancing their declarative glory. The high claims of the Deity, such as being the most High, the Lord of hosts, the first and the last, plead also for the same. The wonderful divine procedure of the six days work considered. Divine wisdom requireth, there should first be some intelligent famous witnesses prepared for praising and singing at the laying the foundation, and corner-stones: And that a high habitation adjusted unto the glorious creator, and those witnessing spirits should be first created. Accordingly, the third heavens and the angels

were

were created the first day. A particular description of the angels, and of the third heavens in their created glory. A threefold proposal of the divine wisdom for regulating the creation, As 1st. That the world to be formed, should be adjusted unto its several inhabitants, higher and lower, and their different qualities. 2. That some signal visible characters of the divine creating perfections should be engraven, upon the more remarkable parts thereof. 3. That its composition, should bear proportion, unto the manifold vicissitudes, and changes it must undergo, before the new heavens and the new earth appear. The divine procedure in each of the six days work considered by itself.

HAVING lately made an essay in the book intitled, *RATIO SACRA* to declare the reasonableness of the doctrines of revealed religion; together with the unreasonableness of all the opposite heresies and errors: I cannot but see, that it may considerably conduce towards the advancing and accomplishing of that necessary design; to descend from the more general abstract reasonings, upon such a subject, unto a more particular and close opening up of the several parts of the complex divine plan of revealed religion: And that both as respecting angels and men; in their creation, and as the objects of the divine predestination; together with the gradual and wise execution of the divine eternal decrees, by the erection of a covenant of works: The permission of the fall of man, the incarnation of the son of God, and the fulfilment of a covenant of grace through him. That so tracing the whole complex procedure of divine providence, towards angels and men, from time unto eternity; we may see the great wisdom and accountableness thereof: Which cannot lie longer hid, providing we seriously consider, 1st. The eternal causes and springs of
the

10 of the World's Creation, by GOD.

the said procedure, as arising from the divine persons, and perfections in the Deity : And *2dly*, compare the same with the high, glorious designs and ends proposed by the foresaid procedure, in relation to God, angels and men. And more especially, *3dly*, If we compare both these with the most wise and proper means, set on work for accomplishing the foresaid ends : From all which, such a glorious conjunction of divine sovereignty, wisdom, power and goodness, shall appear, as solid reason, speaking impartially, cannot longer refuse the foresaid plan, to be a composition most worthy even of the infinitely wise God himself.

It is true indeed, while men only allow a superficial thought or two, upon this or the other part by itself, of this glorious plan ; without considering its connection or proportion, as a part of the whole : Or, without pondering its causes, springs and ends ; they are most ready, to fall into the grossest mistakes, and harshest thoughts of several doctrines in revealed religion. Just as it is with a man who entering some curious artist's shop, and seeing several pieces of the finest workmanship only blocked ; or lying up and down, irregularly scattered, without any order or proportion amongst them ; he no ways valueth or commendeth the same.

Exactly so, a great many persons, looking only superficially upon this and the other part of revealed religion, without any serious consideration of the whole ; they instantly thereupon, with the base spirited unbelieving spies (who scarce well viewed the borders of the promised land, but looked only upon the walled cities and the giants therein) presently take up an evil report ; affirming, that revealed religion is a most unaccountable, contradictory and impossible system.

Whereas considering, that the glorious Deity, must necessarily be acknowledged, to be the most
excellent

excellent being : The divine mind, must infallibly in all its actings be most excellent in counsel, and glorious in working : And thereupon must certainly have the most excellent principles, ends and means, of any other agent in the world. So that were but once the glorious complex eternal plan of the divine decrees, relative to angels and men, fully accomplished : The intelligent, angelical and human mind, shall undoubtedly, enjoy, so much of rational satisfaction, with the whole procedure, as shall oblige them, to spend an eternity, in praising and admiring the high and glorious principles ; the noble and excellent ends ; the proper and powerful means appertaining unto the same.

Notwithstanding all which, so it is at this day, that the world is filled with innumerable books : the principal scope of which, is nothing else, than to fill the minds of men with manifold difficulties, and blasphemous reasonings, against the eternal decrees, of the divine mind, and the temporal wise procedure of the divine providence, in correspondence thereunto. Monstrous boldness ! The dark finite human mind venturing to judge and condemn, the actings of a Deity, infinite in wisdom.

The grand cause, of all which is, that true reason being greatly broke in degenerate men ; and the diabolical seeds of pride and enmity, having come in the room of that original meekness of spirit and perfect love unto God, which at first, adorned the rational soul : Man now, can neither hear of a sovereign Deity, absolutely enacting distinguishing decrees, according to the counsel of his own will ; nor on the other hand, can he submit, unto the humbling contrivance of salvation by a mediator : Nor can he yield himself up, unto the supernatural quickning and sanctifying operations of the Holy Ghost. So that plainly, there is no part, of revealed religion ; whether its founding decrees, by God
the

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the Father ; or the glorious redemption wrought by the Son ; or the gracious operations performed by the holy spirit ; but what are all, most disagreeable unto corrupt man : And being once disagreeable, they must next be unacceptable : And being unacceptable ; hence, is the true cause why they must next be termed, irrational unaccountable. For proud men, will not bear the reflection, of unreasonableness : This rebound, must be upon revealed religion and not upon him.

And therefore, that according to justice, this gross reflection, of unreasonableness, may return and rebound, upon the head of ignorant, and guilty man ; and not lie upon our glorious religion (which is the highest declaration of infinite wisdom, the world ever was, or shall be witness unto) I say to prevent this groundless and most unjust reflection ; there is humbly offered in this treatise a scriptural-rational account, of the whole complex plan of revealed religion : As contained in the decrees, of the divine mind, from all eternity ; and is gradually performed by the divine providence in time ? And as finally and fully accomplished in the great and last day.

Accordingly to begin with creation, as being the first great article of the christian creed ; I shall for the satisfaction of reason with divine revelation about the doctrine of God's creation of the world, first, discourse that great performance of the all-wise and almighty God, in rearing up such a glorious universe, with angels and men therein, and that out of mere, and absolute nothing.

In order to which, I shall humbly offer these two general heads to consideration. First, a rational account, founded upon scripture, of the eternal causes and springs of creation in the Deity. Secondly, a rational account of the divine procedure in the wonderful six days work ; as declared by *Moses* in his history of the creation. As

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As to what concerneth the first, in order to the setting it in some light, the following plan is humbly offered, as equally agreeable to divine revelation and reason.

The all-wise God, to proclaim his eternity, independency, self-sufficiency, and perfect blessedness in, and from the contemplation and enjoyment of himself, spent an entire eternity all alone, before ever he gave being to any creature: Yea even to those morning stars, the joyful witnesses of his laying the foundation and corner stones of the earth. And hence *Moses* finds in the beginning, to wit, of time, no pre-existent being, save God. *Gen. i. 1.*

In this *incomprehensible, eternal view* and enjoyment, which God had of himself, in all his essential, glorious perfections: Let us under the conduct of divine light, consider, that first, God (by spending an eternity thus all alone) found he had now sufficiently secured the glory of the divine self-sufficiency and independency: So that any rational, intelligent being (capable of reflection) in the world to be created, must needs acknowledge those perfections to be with him. Accordingly we find God, improving this, in his reasoning with *Job*, *Where wast thou, when I laid the foundation of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding*, Chap. xxxviii. 4.
2dly. Let us again consider, that God also (in the foresaid view) found by the infiniteness of all his perfections, that he was capable of no addition or diminution, unto, or from his essential glory: Hence justly ariseth that challenge, *Who hath prevented me, that I should repay him? Whatsoever is under the whole heaven, is mine*, *Job. xli. 11.* Upon these tis evident, 3dly, He could not but perfectly foresee, that his work of creation, behoved necessarily, to be acknowledged, as a most free, spontaneous issue from the divine goodness, communicating being, with a great many other perfections, unto mere nothing.

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The infinite understanding, finding thus the essential glory of the Deity secured against all possible events from the creation, we (according to our finite gradual manner of conception) have ground next to conceive God, in the foresaid eternal view, proceeding to lay foundation, for his declarative glory. In order to which,

Let us first consider, God as finding in the glorious God-Head, a trinity of persons, with a distinct order of substance, making way for a distinct order of operation : Whereby he finds, in the divine essence, a glorious creator, a gracious redeemer, and an almighty executor of the will of both : And thereupon finds the creation fully provided for, both as to its first original, glorious state, and also its subsequent, lapsed and decayed condition. Accordingly we find, the distinct, divine persons, before the foundation of the world, having both its foresaid conditions, under their consideration, I mean both its first glorious constitution, and also its subsequent redemption and restoration, *Pro. viii. 22, 23, 27, 31. verses.*

Again *secondly*, Let us consider God as finding in his essential fullness and glory, so many divine perfections, of infinite *wisdom, power, goodness, holiness, justice and truth* (in the pure divine essence all *simply one*) but to our finite conception, seemingly various and many ; because of their diverse objects and different effects. By which he found to be with himself, so many almighty, irresistible, proper principles, every way adjusted for the works of creation and providence. — *I will work, and who shall let it ? Isa. xliii. 13.*

Upon all which discoveries, who can but suppose ? The divine wisdom proposing it as highly reasonable, that so many glorious, divine persons and perfections, all capable of making glorious manifestations in works of creation and providence ; and thereupon capable of a great return of declarative

rative praise and glory ; should be all set on work. That so God, over and above, the perfect satisfaction and blessedness, arising from his eternal, essential excellencies, might also have inconceivable delight, in those performances, without himself ; wherein he might see, as it were, himself, over again in the image and splendor of his own perfections. And that creation was thus the proposal of divine wisdom, is evident from its being termed, *the wisdom of God*, in the abstract, 1 Cor. i. 21. *For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe.* And that God himself, his pleasure and glory was the great rule and ultimate end in view, is no less plainly asserted, Prov. xvi. 4. *The Lord hath made all things for himself.* Rev. iv. 11. *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour, and power ; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created.*

Against this proposal of the divine wisdom ; what possible objection could be formed ? Especially if we consider, that along with the proposal, the same projecting attribute, offereth a perfect idea, (speaking after our finite model) of the whole creation, in all its parts, with the whole complex conduct of providence towards it, in time and eternity. *And thus known unto God were all his works from the beginning.* Acts xv. 18. Which idea being found to be perfectly adjusted to all the designs of God, both as creator, and redeemer ; the remaining attributes, (as influenced by the Holy Ghost) could not but all cry out, *so let it be.* As first, The divine goodness ; that moving spring, I have been long a sealed fountain, allow me now to break open. And next, the divine power, that executing principle, I'll command a glorious universe out of nothing, and preserve it after creation. The di-

vine holiness, that adorning excellency ; I'll contrive a most perfect law. for the moral, intelligent part of the creation. Justice, that guardian perfection, I'll annex a solemn sanction of promises and threatnings unto it. The divine truth, that confirming attribute, I'll impartially perform, without respect of persons, upon angels and men, both parts of the fore said sanction : And thus, *we the invisible things of God*, that have lain hid through eternity, shall be now at length gloriously manifested, *Rom. i. 20. For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and God-Head ; so that they are without excuse.*

Allow next the incommunicable perfections to join in their voice, and require, that by the finiteness, temporal duration, and mutability of the whole creation ; the immensity, eternity and immutability of the Deity, may by the shade (of such a dark-ground colour) shine forth, with the greater brightness and glory. Thus by the heavens and the earth, waxing old like a garment, the mutability of angels and men, while God remaineth forever the same, the great glory redoundeth to the Deity, *Psal. cii. 25, 26, 27. They shall perish (to wit, the whole creation, liable to decay) but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end : Is the great and peculiar glory of the everlasting God.*

Lastly, How should the high divine claims, of the Lord's being, God *all-sufficient, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient* : Together with the glorious epithets of being the *antient of days, the Lord of Hosts, the First and the Last* : How should ever these, without a created world, have shined forth, as the great prerogatives of God alone ? Hence that high, but most just challenge, given by the Deity,

Deity, *Isa.* xl. 18. To whom then will ye liken God? Is founded upon an elegant and majestic previous description of the works of creation from the 12 verse.

Thus now, the first head is cleared, to wit, a rational account of the eternal springs of creation in the Deity: Let reason then, more and more believe, the *creation*, to be the work of a Deity, who is infinite in understanding, and to have proceeded from him, upon the most solid accountable grounds and reasons which possibly could be.

Having now seen the eternal springs of creation giving rise, in the order of nature, to the creating decree. Let us next trace this pregnant resolve to its bringing forth, and so discourse the second general head proposed, to wit, a rational account of the divine procedure in the six days work.

The decreed moment, being come for eternity, its giving way, to the parenthesis of time, (for some few thousands of years to a finite world, hastening to its end) appeareth the almighty God, to become maker of heaven and earth. He who from eternity, had found infinite place, and glory, in, and from himself; Let us now, behold and admire him condescending to create a limited world to dwell in with Man: And humbling himself, to behold the shadowy, finite reflex of his own infinite perfections!

Consider him now as all alone, in this great and stupendous undertaking: No counsellor, no instrumental cause, no performer: For as yet, no second being. Let us behold this God stepping forth to build a world, without the least shadow of previous matter to work upon! Not one stone for the foundation, much less for the superstructure, *Heb.* xi. 3. The things *that are seen*, were not made of things *which do appear*: Plainly, there were as yet no nature nor place to contain it. God was a 1, and nothing besides him.

Upon this, the divine power, to proclaim itself infinite, called out of nothing the wonderful mass of matter, virtually capable, of all the different forms, which afterwards it received; as containing a radical humour for the material principle of life and being, unto the approaching variety of creatures. *Gen. i. 1.* What inconceivable power must this be, commanding the matter of a world out of nothing? Surely infinite; knowing no boundary, save the will that setteth it on work: It being evident, that the power which can convert mere nothing into real being, can have no limit, save the pleasure of the almighty agent.

This performance of creating power, was certainly most glorious; and that whether we consider, either first, its instantaneousness: Done in a moment: In the first moment of time, which was its beginning. Almighty God! The creating one fand would have nonpluss'd the whole angelic power through eternity. Or 2^{dly}, if we consider, the sovereign majestic manner of creation: God *spoke* out the world: So that a *divine Jehi* (Let it be) did all: And behold! As he spake, he was obeyed; as if the world had been already made, and had only wanted the divine permission to appear. Admirable performance! For what finite mind can possibly aright conceive the divine will, in the infiniteness of its power, the sovereignty of its procedure, or in the irresistibleness of its efficacy? Especially if we further reflect on the wonderful composition and mixture, which behoved to be in the first mass of matter; considering that the substance of the innumerable different kinds of creatures in the visible world, was contained therein: There were the different elements, with their numerous offspring, from the glorious sun, to the glow-worm. Hence this mass of matter, Chap. i. 1. Is expressly (previous to their formation) termed

ed the heavens and the earth, as containing the material substance of both ; which at first were probably blended together : The thinner, finer and purer parts being for the heavens, which were to be as molten glass, *Job. xxxvii. 18.* The thicker and grosser for the earth, or terraqueous globe ; to center here below : And accordingly by the after division, various disposition, and formation of this mass, the complex wonderful universe came at length to be perfected, *Gen. ii. 5. 1.*

Divine wisdom, seeing matter now created, but withal without form, a confused chaos, void and dark, acknowledging its new being, by the rudeness of superficies : proposeth first that this rude, inform mass and block of the world (tho' a most glorious proof and monument of infinite power.) yet, that it was unworthy of an infinitely wise agent, and God of order, to permit it to continue such. And therefore proposed next, that it should be formed ; But withal, that in the disposal and formation thereof, a special respect should be had unto the following plan, to wit ; first, that the world to be formed, should in its structure be adjusted unto its several inhabitants ; *God, angels and men.* The *heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's*, but the *earth hath he given to the children of men.* *Psal. cxv. 16.*

More particularly, that God should begin with himself, and provide a most high and holy place, adjusted to the great glory of his immediate presence, the full displays of the divine excellencies. *2dly*, That some signal, visible characters of the divine perfections, should be engraven upon the more remarkable parts of the creation ; that so, God's name might become excellent in all the earth, *Psal. viii. 1.* *3dly*, That its composition should bear proportion unto the great and manifold vicissitudes and changes it must undergo, before the

new heavens and the new earth come to be established, 2 *Pet.* iii. 3. 4^{thly}, That the formation of the universe being now at hand, and being a performance most glorious, deserving great praise ; that therefore, there ought to be first created, some intelligent living witnesses, capable of singing, and praising, at the laying the foundation, and corner stones of the earth.

According to this fourfold proposal of divine wisdom, which God possessed in the beginning of his way, before his works of old, *Prov.* viii. 22. (meaning *our Lord*, as projecting according to the conduct of infinite wisdom) let us remark, the divine procedure in the following steps, &c.

First of all, we have solid ground, from the creator's own testimony, to believe that the *third heavens*, with their glorious inhabitants, the *holy angels*, were first created and put in order. Hence we find the Lord (to convince *Job*, that he was but an earth-worm, and but of yesterday, and that consequently, his knowledge and experience, could be no party, for the infinite understanding ;) challenging him, where he was, when the foundations of the earth were laid, and the morning stars sang together, *Job* xxxviii. 4, 7. But the scriptures being written for men, and not for angels ; and also, that the great glory of that high and holy place, may have the more of a glorious surprize and satisfaction in it, unto the militant christian ; therefore most wisely, the Holy Ghost, hath not insisted so particularly on it, as on the other more visible part, of the creation : And therefore as I shall not determine whether the said third heavens were comprized in the fore said *Chaos*, or distinct from it, by its being immediately created in its perfection ; so neither, shall I enlarge in describing the same :

Not that it wants matter for description ; considering

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dering how we are told, that it is a *great city*, and its name the *holy Jerusalem*, *Rev. xxi. 10.* Its walls being of precious stones ; Its gates of twelve pearls ; and twelve angels attending the same, *v. 12.* Its streets being pure gold, as it were, transparent glass, *v. 21.* The highest and most glorious metaphors in nature ; all pointing out the greatness of its created glory. But even in this respect, heaven being to continue a secret to the bodily eye, till the morning of the resurrection ; It is therefore but a faint glance by reasoning, that we can have, till the veil be rent, even of the created glory of this most holy place.

However, to look into it a little, let us consider it as the palace of the great king, where the throne of God, and of the Lamb is erected, surrounded, with the innumerable hosts of angels and arch-angels : As the habitation, designed for the immediate divine presence, and the glorious displays of the divine perfections ; and as the city of which God owns himself to be maker and builder, *Heb. xi. 10* Importing clearly, that in its glory, it beareth proportion to the contrivance of infinite wisdom, the performance of infinite power, and unto the good-will of infinite love. But above all, its being part of the purchase of the blood of the son of God, its glory must certainly, considerably proclaim the divine estimate of that blood ; and consequently be great.

If we again desire some more visible proofs of its created glory, let us call to mind the refreshing and ravishing light and glory, at the transfiguration, causing the disciples desire to fix their tents even upon the wild mount, and never to come down : And yet all this, was but a passing faint glimpse (of what is above) overshadowing them, *Matth. xvii 1. to verse 6.* 'Tis also remarkable to this purpose, the account we have of the paved
work

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work under God's feet upon mount *Sinai*, *Exod.* xxiv. 10. *And they saw the God of Israel, and there was under his feet, as it were, a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were, the body of heaven in his clearness.* Intimating the inconceivable created light and glory, which will attend the more immediate communications of the divine presence and love in heaven.

Briefly, the glorious firmament, bespangled with sun, moon and stars, is but the under and courser side of the pavement of that higher house. Hence *Solomon* speaking of it, calls it the *heaven of heavens*, *1 Kings* ix. 27. Meaning, the starry and aerial; their being but like the dull and dark earth, in comparison of it: Accordingly, *John* attests, the sun and moon would be of no use there, *Rev* xxi. 23. In fine, considering 'tis the habitation, wherein God and the Lamb, elect angels and men, are to spend eternity, its glory must be certainly exceeding great, that so it may be forever satisfying.

This *heaven of heavens*, being made, not to contain the divine omnipresence, or the ubiquity, which fill'eth every where equally, hell and heaven; and far else to circumscribe the divine immensity, which not only exceedeth all compass of one created world, but is ready to fill a thousand more, were they created; And after all, continue still as unlimited, as by this one: It is evident, that heaven was never made to contain or circumscribe the boundless Deity; but only as a proper scene, for the more immediate and glorious manifestations of the divine excellencies. In order to which, wisdom saw it necessary to plant in it, as inhabitants, some noble, and highly intelligent rational beings; and these were the glorious angels.

These angels were all at once created, to proclaim how quickly God could have replenished the low-

er world also, had he pleased. And being the first born of the creation, it was highly reasonable, they should in their nature and perfections, above all others, resemble their creator : Accordingly, they were made substances, purely spiritual, essentially immaterial, and by decree, *immortal* : And being to stand in the presence of the thrice holy God, they must be perfectly holy. Again, their exercise being *hallelujahs* to God, for all his perfections, in their glorious operations ; accordingly their knowledge of God and his works must be great. Again, being to be the armies of the Lord of hosts they must be marshalled in order, by a subordination of power amongst them : Hence some of them, *Dan* x. 13. are *chief princes*, as it were, the first and principal ministers of state, fit to be employed upon extraordinary and eminent occasions, *Jude* 9. v And further, being at times to perform the greatest of services, such as, sometimes in a night, to kill all *Egypt's* first-born, or *Senacherib's* numberless host : Their power above all that is created, must resemble the almighty arm, *Psal.* cii 20. Again, being to oversee, and instrumentally to over-rule the great events amongst men below. *Ezek.* i. 5, 15. They must have the advantage of their residence on high ; especially being at times afterwards to engage with wicked principalities and powers in high places (*Eph.* vi. 12.) some of their own rebellious race. As also, being frequently to converse with saints on earth they must be capable at times of human shapes, *Gen.* xviii 2. But withal, these *occasional garments* must be loose, like the air or cloud, of which they are made, that so the great swiftness of their motion, (having their court at such a distance) may not be marred.

And *Lastly*, being designed, as co-eternal companions of the redeemed, to stand before the throne

of

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of God and the Lamb ; therefore they must be filled with high admiration of the glorious redeemer, in his person and performances, 1 *Pet.* i. 12. *Which things they desire to look into.*

That so they may sing at his birth, comfort him at his death, attend him at his resurrection, honour him at his second coming : And finally, they must be indued with great good-will to the redeemed, that so they may rejoice at their conversion, take care of their protection, convey their souls at their dissolution, assist at their resurrection, and at last advance the glorious sentence in its execution. Upon the whole, this lower world little knoweth, the manifold secret obliging services, done by these affectionate, wise and mighty angelic powers (in subordination to Christ) the sincerest and greatest friends of mankind. *Let at Sdoo, Jacob at Bethel, Elisha at Dothan, the Shepherds in the fields, and Peter in the prison,* could all subjoin a great AMEN upon this subject. And thus, having now heard of the glorious third heavens, with their more glorious inhabitants ;

Let us next descend from the higher to the lower world, and survey the more visible parts of the creation. And then,

The first thought that occurreth, is, that great mysterious account given by *Moses* of the spirit's moving upon the face of the waters, *Gen.* i. 2. And so becoming, by an almighty, secret, incomprehensible influence, the great procreator merachepeth of the visible heavens, earth and sea, and of all that in them is, giving a quickning prolific power and virtue unto the mass of matter, upon which he moved.

The glorious power, the unsearchable wisdom, the wonderful order, shining in the whole procedure of the six days work ; who dare undertake to declare ? Only what we cannot comprehend, let us praise and admire.

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Now it was that light, the first-born of the inanimate formed creation, was commanded to shine out of darkness : The God of light, about to rear up a glorious universe, must not be hid nor work in obscurity. What this *light* was, whether some elementary fire or bright cloud, or rather some shining illuminating glorious body ? Ready to transmit and spread itself through the air, whereby light was set up, betwixt the higher and lower world, who except some of the morning stars, that sang together, can possibly declare ? But certain it is, as it was a performance worthy of him who is *light inaccessible*, so it was a new second proof of infinite power, to cause light thus to shine even out of darkness itself : Two of the greatest contraries in nature. Hence the apostle comes over it (2 Cor. iv. 6) As containing in it, a solid proof and secret prophecy of a sufficient power in God for a performance, yet more glorious ; even the saving illumination of the corrupt mind, where spiritual darkness consolidated with strong enmity, stands inveterate. Several reasons pleaded for this glorious natural illumination of the lower world : Man by a bodily eye was to contemplate the great works of God, that so he might praise him : The son of God in the fullness of time, was to be incarnate, and to tabernacle with men below, and therefore it was highly suitable, that gloomy darkness upon the face of the deep, should give way to glorious light, and retire as to its centre, where the good will of him, that dwelt in the bush, was never to dwell, *Matth. viii. 12.*

Light being sprung up, and like him from whom it came, offering to extend itself every where, the wise creator prepared it, an expanded firmament, and the extensive Air, with their several stories, *Amos 9 6.* making way for its flying influence. Upon which let us here admire the almighty arm, stretching

stretching out the vast and unmeasurable heavens, the highest part of the visible world, and that without any regard unto, or dependence upon a foundation, save the same word of power, that erected them. *Gen. i. 6. Incomprehensible God!*

Upon this expansion of the firmament and air, the waters as yet over-running the surface of the earth were drained: The clouds carrying a great part of them above, and settling them there, as great and rich fountains, at God's disposal: While the remaining part below, by the irresistible word of power, are commanded to shrink in their proud heads, into their proper channels: And thus the dry land appeared, inviting inhabitants, as having got the proud ocean, now surrounded with the sand, as a swadling band; and as being now enriched with lakes and rivers, besides the great unknown depths contain'd in its bowels below, *Gen. i. 6, to 10.*

These great parts of the creation already made, must be owned by all to be exceeding glorious; the heavens above, and the earth and sea below. But still something more worthy of God, as the living God (in whom the fountain of life is) was yet wanting: And therefore, life, (that divine spark) the moving spring of the (as yet) inanimate and dull creation (so often and accurately imitated by art, but never yet in all the world realized) must next appear. But withal that the performance may be exceeding glorious, its production must be slow and gradual. And for this end, a threefold kind of life must be created: First the vegetative, for adorning the face of the earth, and for nourishing the sensitive (the more excellent) yet deriving its original from the same material parent the earth. But lest by vegetatives, growing up out of the earth, their root should be called their maker, therefore next an animal life, not growing

growing out, but moving upon the earth, must be produced. But still both these, being absolutely in their nature remote from the perfections of their glorious maker, and the grand design of creation : Therefore an intelligent rational life, must next receive being ; at once to declare and resemble the intelligent moral perfections of the Deity, and to speak by way of praise for the other two, with all the remaining silent part of the creation.

Accordingly to prepare the earth, now separate from the waters, as a convenient habitation for man, God the fountain of all power and virtue, to proclaim himself at once, the God of nature ; and at the same time an almighty agent, quite above it, and absolutely independent of all its rules, he, before ever the earth knew the husbandman, or any seed from his hand, or was in the least, wet with the dew of heaven, or warmed with the influence of the sun ; bless'd it with a fructifying virtue, whereby it instantly brought forth ; all kinds of fruitful trees, plants and herbs, and these, not gradually springing up, but all at once, in their greatest perfection ; suitable to the almighty planter. The trees being enriched and adorned with their manifold ripe fruits ; the plants and herbs, pleasantly blown in their various flowers, causing a beautiful proportion on the surface of the earth below, to correspond with that of the firmament above ; about to be, bespangled, with the sun, moon and stars. Briefly, what a pleasant *Eden* and summer-house, should paradise have been to man for some time ? Till he should have exchanged it with heaven ; had not the cursed deforming wind of sin blown upon it.

The superstructure of the inanimate world being now far advanced, and about to be possessed by the animate living creation : Wisdom found it proper, that

that first it should be further illuminated and adorned : As also this lower world never being finally designed for man's heaven and eternal habitation, but as a passing wilderness unto the promised land, therefore it was also found suitable that the night should have its turn with the day, and winter be exchanged with summer : And again, the inferior, coarser and duller creatures, on earth (which in the first separation and disposition of the general mass, concentrated here below) these being to depend in a natural course, upon the influence of the more refined spirituous and active part, elevated above ; therefore to accomplish all the foresaid-ends, the all-wise creator, set in the firmament, the sun and moon, with a glorious train of stars, to be numbered only by him, that made them, together with *Mazzaroth* and *Arcturus*, *Orion* and *Pleiades* ; all influencing the lower world, with its inhabitants ; (But especially in its vegetative, sensitive and mineral parts) more than the most wise and searching naturalists, have yet found out. *Job xxxviii. 31, 32, 33. Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion ? Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season, or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons ? Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven ? Canst thou set the dominion thereof in the Earth ?* But withal, on the other hand, that man, situated so pleasantly on earth, and under such a fixed course of benign influences from the heavens, may be kept from idolizing nature, and calling it God ; therefore in deep wisdom, another and quite contrary kind of treasures, to wit, of fire, lightning and thunder, are also prepared on high, to go out at the divine command, and destroy the most promising fruits of the earth, break the tallest cedars, and cause proud man to tremble, if he shall rebel. *Canst thou thunder with a voice like God ? Job xl. 9.*

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The high firmament, or starry heavens being thus perfected and furnished with influence powers, proportion required, that the extensive aerial heavens, the wide and empty earth, the vast and deep Ocean, with the smaller lakes and rivers, should all, also be replenished, lest the divine fullness and all-sufficiency should be suspected.

Accordingly the air, as the region most proper for a flying motion, is filled with all manner of winged fowls, from the eagle to the wren, and from the wren to the midge; differing as much in their designs as in their kinds. Some of them silent, to tell; who? taught others to sing: Others of them with their voice wonderfully praising their maker: Some of them chattering upon the ground, calling upon others to ascend the bush; these again by a greater and more regular elevation of voice, influencing others to mount the taller trees, with their pleasant notes; by which the more perfect musicians amongst them, are cheered up, to soar on high, and pierce the very clouds with their melodious voices; as if nature hereby designed the teaching man, all the several parts, in the gradation or gamut of musick: Briefly, they sing sweetly, at once praising their maker above, and admonishing man below.

Some of them as the eagle, *Job xxxix. 27.* excellling in strength and greatness of spirit, looking down from the highest rocks, with pride and contempt, upon the birds of the valley. Others, remarkable for the regularity, swiftness and extent of their flight, as the hawk. Some of them wonderful in the great variety and beauty of their feathers, like the peacock: Others of them admirable for their humane-like passions, such as the extraordinary affection of the pelican towards the nourishing of her young; The great faithfulness and sympathy of the dove; the sagacity of the parrot;

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the laboriousness of the bee. As upon the contrary, others for their hardness and stupidity, like the ostrich, whom her maker hath deprived of wisdom, so that all her labour is in vain. *Finally*, all of them joining together, cry, behold the wonderful perfections of our maker : And hence God himself, insisteth on this subject with *Job*, nonplussing and silencing him, by so many queries founded thereon, *Job xxxix. 13. to 18. verse.*

As for the waters wonderful offspring upon the divine command, who can declare ? If discoursed from the great whales (those living Islands) to the small minnows ; what an ocean of wonders would be found ? In number like the waves that cover them. In their shoals at times, marching like marshalled armies ; in the variety of their shape ; proclaiming an infinite mould with their contriver : In the well set rows of their silver scales, variously checkered with spots of different colours, challenging even the winged creation in point of beauty : And lastly, in the due proportion and situation of their fins, teaching the mariner at once to ballast and sail aright. But above all, let us hear the divine interview with *Job*, upon the great *Leviathan* ; the monstrous kind of whales. Says God ; *his heart is as firm as a stone ; yea, a piece of the nether milstone ; when he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid ; he esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood ; he maketh the deep to boil like a pot ; he maketh a path to shine after him ; one would think the deep to be hoary ; he beholdeth all high things, he is a king over all the children of pride, Job. xi. 24 to 34.* What a wonderful and almighty God, must his maker be ! Who after all this terrible and unmangeable strength and pride, could make him a safe cabin and passage boat unto a perishing *Jonah*, Chap. i. 17. and ii. 10. verse.

The air and waters being thus replenished, the
earth

earth man's designed habitation, (who was to survey, and make return for all) must not be left empty. While the birds soar and sing sweetly in the air above him, the mute fish swim and play in the murmuring and gliding streams below him; he must as the great farmer, have his flocks about him.

Accordingly the earth, is pleasantly furnished ; a new and wonderful living product appeareth upon it. Some of them for profit, others for pleasure. Some of them with the tamer cattle, must be at hand for food and raiment, adorning the pastures, and causing the vallies to eccho. Others of them, as the lion, must be the strength and pride of the wood ; roaring his fellow creatures into a trembling silence : Some of them with the wild ass and dromedary must traverse and snuff up the useless wind of the wilderness, ranging the unmeasurable mountains, despising the multitude of the city, and cry of the driver. Others of them with the horse, disdaining the sound of the trumpet and rattling of the spear. Some of them with the dragon, terrible for power, subtilty and rage, sparkling fire with his eyes, poisonous in his breath, seldom sleeping ; and when about to kill, feeding upon all the poisonous herbs, he possibly can gather ; as also wonderfully fitted for the prey, by three rows of great teeth, having his venom in his tongue and gall ; all rendering him a most lively emblem of the *infernal dragon*, Rev. xx. 2. And this so much the more, as he is filled with enmity against the elephant, as larger, and the eagle, as mounting higher than himself. Others of them with *Behemoth*, (the elephant) requiring not only the willows of the brook, but the shade of a wood, to cover him ; drinking up a river at once, and threatening to draw up *Jordan* into his mouth, moving his trunk like a cedar : On earth, the chief of the

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ways of God ; only he that made him, can make his sword approach him, *Job* iv. 15. to 24. Surely wisdom (*Ecclel.* ix. 16.) is better than strength ; otherwise little man, had never so lorded it over such fellow creatures.

C H A P T E R II.

After the World is thus finished, there remains still a great blank in architecture, till man, bearing the glorious Creator's image and divine motto be set up, as it were, over the gate. A sixtold design in the human creation. 1. To proclaim the moral perfections of the Deity. 2dly. As a covenanting party capable of transacting with God ; as prince and subject, by reason of the great abilities, and original perfection of the human nature. 3dly. As the great high priest and praising mouth of the silent creation. 4thly. As the Lord or majestic head of the inferior living creatures. 5thly. The angels must have an equal ; a second order of nature, like unto their own : For God only must be alone, and without a second. 6thly. The grand tho' latent design of man's creation, (as the issue of providence hath now confirmed) was the paving the way, for the great mystery of God manifested in the flesh. Man being created, must not be left alone : Being in himself, and in his posterity, the object of so many great, divine, eternal counsels. He is most conveniently and honourably situate in paradise, both for spiritual converse with the Creator, religious contemplations, and natural enjoyments. The premises being considered, the whole proposals of divine wisdom for regulating the creation, are found to be perfectly observed.

Thus

THUS now we have seen the lower world, furnished in all its stories and apartments : But behold ! Still, there remains a great defect and blank in architecture : The glorious Creator's arms, together with the divine motto, are not yet set up over the gate. Plainly, the glorious Creator, as yet hath no son in it, *Luke iii. 38.* After his own image to possess it as his heir, rule in it, as his viceroy, converse with him, as his intimate ; nor as the great high priest to worship him : By proclaiming (with *Melehizedeck*) over the head of the silent creation, that great motto, *the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth, Gen. xiv. 19.* Briefly, it was found, till man should be created, neither God, nor angels, can converse on earth.

Upon this, the council of the *great three in one* is called, and it being found, at the two orders of nature already created, the one, being purely spiritual, to wit, the angels ; the other, a gross mass of matter, remaining still material, under all its different and most refined forms, were no ways adjusted to one another : Paradise, yea, the tree of life itself being no food for angels, whose life, is to stand in the presence, and behold the face of God.

Therefore as a consummate proof of the great ability of the creating perfections, a glorious reconciling compound of both natures spiritual and material is contrived, and this contrivance is man ; in his soul bringing heaven down to earth, and in his body bringing earth up to heaven. Let us a little survey this compendious master-piece of the creation.

Six great designs (all issuing in the glory of God, as the ultimate end) seem to have been in the Creator's eye, in making man.

First, that the glorious moral perfections of the Deity, not yet displayed, might be proclaimed. The divine wisdom, power and goodness had in-

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deed already been made illustrious, and had proclaimed the Deity, the Lord God almighty ; but as yet nothing in the lower world, had proclaimed him glorious in holiness : And therefore the pattern proposed at man's creation, was (*Gen. i. 26*) after our own image. Accordingly, *Adam* originally was perfectly holy ; holy in his nature, in his frame, and in his walk, without failure in principle, motive or end. Thus God attests he was upright, *Eccles. vii. 29* Briefly, as God was a spirit, knowing and contemplating himself, in his essential perfections, and their several glorious operations ; and thereupon loving himself, and delighting in his own fullness ; As God knew no rule, save his own will, nor no ultimate end, save his own glory : Accordingly man in his soul was a spirit perfectly thus exercised (so far as the finite faculties and powers would extend) contemplating God in his glorious perfections, loving him with all the soul, and the creatures principally for his sake ; yea, even himself, because he first and principally loved God ; and withal knowing no rule nor end, save the will and glory of God. In fine, *Adam* (*Luke iii. 38*) The son of God, was perfectly in his own likeness ; all over divine, so far as the terrene condition would allow.

Secondly, Man was designed as a covenanting party to transact with God, as prince and subject. And therefore as he was created reasonable, endued with moral perfections, so also with a natural ability to perform perfectly both the impressed and revealed will of God : His mind had a fullness of light, understanding perfectly the whole of truth (proper for the first covenant state and condition :) Without the least mixture of error. His practical understanding and conscience, had a clear powerful impression of real and present duty, without the least hesitation or doubt. His will a full bend-
ed

ed inclination towards all good, without the least bias. His affections perfectly regular in their motions without the least of an extream : His memory, an infallible register, for God and duty, without any allay of weakness ; surely man hath destroy'd himself, *Hof* xiii. 9. For considering the great perfection of grace allowed upon him in his original condition (which, had he actually improved) he had certainly been, sufficient party, even for the grand enemy. A deliberate peremptory, *get thee behind me* had secured all : Briefly, a fallen angel, could never have forced perfect man ; yea nor so much as deceived him, had he but acted like himself. But what shall be said ? unsearchable wisdom ! Creating love must give way to redeeming ; and the first *Adam* to the second ; and the temporary covenant of works, unto the everlasting covenant of grace ; as being by far more glorious to God, and honourable to the mediator ; and therefore man in his best estate, must be mutable : As indeed the most noble and excellent created being of necessity must be ; as not being self-sufficient nor independent, but in its nature and operations depending upon another.

Thirdly, Man was designed as the great high priest, and praising mouth of the silent creation. An infinitely wise God, must not create such a world in vain. Accordingly, nature was laid open unto man ; he saw it in the greatness of its parts requiring almighty power ; and in its wonderful composition, to have certainly been the product of infinite wisdom. Again, considering its creation ; its necessary and costly preservation ; and all this, without the least hope of any addition, to the divine essential glory ; he could not thereupon shun the clear discovery, of the world's being the undoubted offspring of the greatest goodness. Briefly, there seemeth to be little ground left for dis-

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pute, but that as *Adam* evidenced a perfect knowledge of the animals, by imposing proper names, adjusted to their several kinds. *Gen* ii. 19. 20. (whose natural powers and operations were equally intricate and curious, if no more, with other pieces of the creation) so he could also have named and defined the whole material world. For if *Solomon*, at such a distance, and under the great disadvantages, of a weak mind, in respect of *Adam's*; and of decayed and deformed nature, could write so accurately, from the tall cedar to the creeping hyssop upon the wall, what could perfect man have done, especially when the original glory of nature, was a glass to itself?

All which discoveries, together with the fuller manifestations he had of all those perfections in himself, where the whole of created excellencies were made to center; (man being brought as near the Deity; the creature to the creator, as the finite clay on earth could well allow,) I say all these affecting considerations conspiring together, could not fail of producing perfect praise and blessing unto the glorious fountain and author of such great perfections and privileges: More especially when impressed on a soul naturally all love to God; and whom God had so greatly obliged by making him heir of all? Briefly, it was now that declarative glory in earnest, began to be displayed, and the return was so perfect and acceptable that the immediate ensuing seventh day, must be set a-part and intirely spent in receiving it. In fine, the time was not yet come, wherein the Lord repented him that he had made man.

Fourthly, This lower world, man's habitation, being replenished with an innumerable variety of living, but unreasonable creatures; which by their different natures and tempers, seemingly threatened to destroy one another, and by their great strength
rather

rather like to prove hurtful, than useful to man ; and therefore requiring an obediential subordination, not only amongst themselves, but under some awful head, who as Lord might have dominion over them : Accordingly man was created, who by the stateliness of his person, majesty of his countenance, and awfulness of an articulate voice ; meeting with an impressed obediential instinct, in the living creatures, he thereupon became the great sovereign on earth ; was crowned with honour and glory, having all things put under his feet, *Psal. viii. 5, 6.* And never met with rebellion, till he first himself rebelled : Which monstrous ingratitude provoking the author of his authority, the chain of subordination, was most justly and quickly broken, and all presently turned into the greatest confusion.

Fifthly, The angels, as yet the only intelligent created beings, must not have the temptation of thinking, that both worlds, higher and lower, were made for them ; but more especially of thinking, that God could not create a second order of natures like unto theirs. God only must be without a second *Who may once compare himself with him ? (Isai. xlv. 6.)* is a challenge only proper to be made by the Deity. And hence, had the sun in the firmament been, as intelligent, as glorious ; it is more than probable, he had not been alone. For if *Gabriel* be an archangel, there must be a *Michael* also, that can claim the same too, *I am God, and there is none else Isai. xlv. 22.* is an assertion and dialect altogether above the creature. Therefore in the depth of wisdom, man here below, as fellow to the angels above, was created ; In due time equally capable of glorifying and enjoying God ; tho' for a time, till the glorious mystery of God incarnate, be revealed and accomplished, he must be made, and continue a little lower than the angels, *Psal. viii. 5.*

Sixthly,

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Sixthly, The grand (though latent) design of man's creation (if we speak of the designed divine improvement of his fallen state) was the opening a door for that great mystery of God manifested in the flesh : In order unto a clearer, fuller and higher display of the divine perfections, than what possibly creation can produce : That so a double return of declarative glory, might redound unto God ; first as the almighty Creator of a world out of nothing, and next as the wonderful redeemer, giving life and perfect blessedness, a second time to an elect world absolutely buried in spiritual death, and sealed up therein, by the strongest bars of gross ignorance, rooted unbelief, carnal reason, and inveterate enmity. *Son of man can these dead bones live ? Ezek xxxvii. 3*

That this was the grand design of all, is evident from the other five, their giving way so quickly, to this sixth, and last. So that in the holy, wise, permissive conduct of divine providence, *Adam's* sin and fall, (so far as is recorded) allowed God but one sabbath of contemplation and complacency in upright man, and in the creation, as in its original rectitude and glory : By which all the forefaid five designs, were in a great measure disappointed and lost ; yet so as secretly by a wheel within a wheel, (*Ezek i. 16*) Carrying on the Deity's pleasure. Briefly, all the persons of the adorable trinity, consulted and spoke at man's creation (*Gen. i. 26*) (while a simple *let be*, served the turn of all the other creatures) and therefore, he must not only in his soul with the angels bear the image of the moral perfections of the Deity, in respect of knowledge, righteousness and holiness ; but further, by being partaker of flesh and blood, must also resemble, and make way for the glorious Immanuel, *Isai. vii. 14* Accordingly we are told, *Heb. ii. 14*. That forasmuch then, as the children,

are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself, took part of the same. And finally, as the issue of the father's creation, and son's redemption, man must be again renewed and perfectly sanctified, by a deep impress of the gifts and graces of the holy ghost : And then, that first and great resolve, at man's creation of making man after the image of God (*Gen. i. 26.*) shall in spite of intervening opposition, be fully performed, and thereby the great last end of all ; even, the praise of the glory of the divine grace shall be accomplished, *Eph. i. 3, 4, 5, 6.*

Man, being now created and perfect ; the Lord to elevate his thoughts and desires, and to present him with some emblem (though faint) of heaven ; allows him a paradise ; a special and glorious apartment on earth, every way adjusted to man as the lord of the lower world. For, as here was all, the animal life could possibly desire or enjoy, without the least alloy of corruption or imperfection ; so also, there was here, for the immortal soul, a present all-sufficient smiling God ; allowing man communion with himself. And again as an assurance and perseverance in happiness, while in holiness ; and as a powerfull motive towards the same, here was the *tree of life* : And as the *great caveat* against temptation, here was also the *tree of knowledge of good and evil* ; at once to impress man, with the possibility of his fall ; and also the certainty of the misery which would ensue thereupon : And further both these symbolical trees, were planted in the midst of the garden, *Gen. ii. 9.* That so man might frequently have them in view, and by beholding the one, might be secured against eating of the other : For, who, in the very sight of life, could be supposed to swallow down bitter and poisonous death ? Thus was man situate and secured in paradise : And what could God have done more ?

more? The glory of divine independency, self-sufficiency and immutability, forbidding any universal established decree, to be affixed to angels or men, yea to arch-angels themselves: *Mat xxv. 41.* No variableness nor shadow of turning; is the sole prerogative of the Deity. In fine, fallen angels and fallen man must proclaim, and set off the glory of an independent, infallible and unchangeable God: And if any of them stand, while others fall, it must be owing intirely to an extrinsic decree (*1 Tim. v. 21.*) and power, without themselves, and not unto any intrinsic, immutable perfection of their natures: *I am that I am*——is a name only for God, *Exod. iii. 14.*

But now all this while, man is, as yet, all alone. The excellent human nature, as yet extended no further than one individual *Adam*: This must not be. The spacious universe is too large, for one single inhabitant. Neither must the high and numerous angels despise little man, as solitary upon the footstool. Besides, God must have access to appear as the sovereign and wise governor of the world, and disposer of his creatures, and all their actions: And therefore must have succeeding generations of men to come, in which, the eternal counsels (adjusted to time) consisting of so many various pieces, may gradually be accomplished. Moreover, the redeemer also, must have a multitude about the throne, which no man can number: Upon all which, it was necessary, that man should not be alone. But above all, the old serpent raging against a sovereign and just Deity, must have access, to try his malice, subtilty and power upon the woman, and in her, for a little (seemingly) to triumph over both man, and his maker: That so in the reverse of this conquest, to the eternal glory of the divine wisdom, the very same party (from whom *Satan* promised himself so much) might by her

of Man's Creation, by GOD. 41

her promised seed in due time, not only bruise the heel, but even the very head of that grand enemy, *Gen. iii. 15.*

But withal, that man who was first made, may still keep his birth-right, given him in the order of creation, therefore the woman must be of the man, and not the man of the woman, that so he may be the head of the whole race of mankind. And finally, that next to our love to God and ourselves, the love of husband and wife, might be most sincere, superlative and constant, therefore she must be *bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh; a second self.* Accordingly, the *rib* is taken out, formed and brought back to man, supplying the great defect of the want of a help meet for him; which could not be found amongst all the previous creation, *Gen. ii. 20, 21, 22. &c.* Having thus discoursed creation,

Let us now look back to the *several proposals* of divine wisdom, for the regulating the procedure thereof, mentioned at the beginning of the preceding chapter, and remark how accurately they have been all observed.

Behold! How, first, solemn witnesses were created, and next how well the higher and lower worlds are adjusted, to their different inhabitants. Behold also, how every where the legible characters of the divine perfections are impressed. Angels and men proclaiming the divine knowledge, righteousness and holiness. The world's fulness, the Deity's all-sufficiency. The boundless extent of the heavens, his immensity; the fixed rocks, his immutability; the great hills, his strength; the equal and steady course of nature, his faithfulness; the universal influence of the sun, his omnipresence; the voice of thunder, his terrible majesty; and the long duration of time, his everlastingness.

Again, as wisdom proposed; so, how exactly,

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is the world in its composition, adjusted to the various vicissitudes and changes, it was to undergo in time? Hence it is made up of such contrary elements, and these so disposed and situated, that when man's sin caused the creator to repent his making him, then the heavens hath windows above, and the earth great depths below, to be broken up, for drowning a sinful world. There are also magazines of fire and brimstone above, as there are *Etnas* below, prepared for unnatural *Sodom*. The air with its *hurricanes*, can depopulate whole islands at once, threatening, as it were, to shake the great ocean out of its place. Yea even, the pillars of the fixed earth are at times set on trembling, as if the foundation had given way. In fine, all is so disposed; that when the fabrick of this visible world, hath stood and served its decreed time, as the scene, for the several appointed generations of men; *Then the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements melt with fervent heat, and the earth with the works thereof shall be burnt up, 2 Peter iii. 10.* And all this, to make way for a *new heavens and new earth. Rev. xxi. 1.* Which shall bear full proportion, to the great glory and lasting duration of the *higher house*, with the church therein made perfect; that so both worlds, being of a piece, all over divine goodness, (*Satan* and sin being now sunk into the lowest hell) God in his creating, redeeming and restoring perfections, may be loved, adored and admired through eternity. Surely, just ground to cry out, *In wisdom hast thou made them all, Psal. civ. 24.*

CHAPTER

C H A P T E R III.

Several important inferences from the doctrine of creation, As 1. To mock at the falshood and folly of the old philosophical notions and fictions; of the matter of the world's being from eternity: And its owing its formation unto a fortuitous concurrence of atoms. 2dly. On the other hand, to behold and admire the inconceivable fulness of the Deity, from whom such a world hath sprung: More especially considering that the fountain remaineth still the same. The essential divine fulness, who can declare? The influential, enriching the whole universe is wonderful. Upon the consideration of both, the rational soul must of necessity cry out: incomprehensible God! 3dly, God being the world's and man's creator; he must certainly be man's supream and chief good: Seeing the creature can never be supposed to enjoy capacities, above the perfections and powers of its maker: The vanity and insufficiency of all temporary enjoyments and accomplishments; secular or moral, for being a satisfying portion, to the spiritual enlarged desires of the immortal soul. This in particular demonstrated by rational evidence, in relation unto honours, riches and pleasures of all kinds: As also with respect unto the more noble and agreeable endments, of natural, moral and political knowledge and learning: All which may be without the saving experimental knowledge of God the chief good. Appealers and pretenders to reason, expostulated with from the premises; either to become more sincere and cordial in their choice of God in Christ, for their souls portion: otherwise no more to pretend to judge and act rationally in religion.

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religion. The gracious, condescending and rational method proposed in revealed religion, for man's coming by a saving eternal interest, in this all-sufficient glorious Deity.

THE truths contain'd in the two preceding chapters, being seriously considered, reason itself cannot longer refuse the following inferences.

As first, to mock at the unaccountable old philosophical fictions, of the matter of the world, its being from eternity, and of the world's owning its composition unto a fortuitous concurrence of atoms: For as was declared in the fifth chapter of *RATIO SACRA* in the reasonings against atheism, reason can never rest in inanimate matter, as the great first cause of such a glorious universe; but must ascend to some living, intelligent all wise and almighty efficient cause, which as pre-existent to all hath in time given being, both to the matter, and form of the world. And as to the alledged fortuitous concurrence of atoms, it is strange, that since that time, such a concurrence never in the least appeared: no, not so much as to rear up the most insignificant shepherd's cottage in the wilderness, without human contrivance and concurrence. How then, can reason ever consent to this? For who can reflect upon the vast number and variety of created beings, all so proportionably united together, with the different offices of the several parts, the dependence and subserviency of one of them to another; the continuing harmonious course observed by nature from season to season? I say, who possibly can be an eye witness to these things, and allow himself to be so far wheedled out of his senses, as to believe that a confused motion; like to that of the dust (in a whirlwind) could ever have produced such a wonderful fabrick, as the world is?

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The spring of such ridiculous opinions is obvious. The authors of them, on the one hand, poring upon the greatness, excellency and wonderfulness of the works of creation; and on the other, being dark and confused in their notions, of the true God, in his creating perfections, and withal, being either without the advantage of *Moses's* accurate history of this mysterious performance; or else impress'd and abused with mean thoughts of, and prejudices against all scripture history: They could not after all reflection, fall upon any author or first cause, whom with confidence they could give out as the creator of such a world; as finding none bearing any proportion thereunto. And therefore as an apology for their ignorance (like a fearful fish confusing the water) they were obliged to contrive this general and dark response, of a fortuitous concurrence, or inexplicable chance, to solve or rather silence all the *nun plussing queries*, which might arise from such a great and intricate subject. Thus *Pharoah*, who knows not God, (*Exod. v. 2. and vii. 11.*) must betake himself unto the magicians: And as he from gross ignorance, did mistake the author of providence, so they from the same cause, the author of creation.

In short, he that now, after such clear divine revelation, making the whole history of the creation so evident, and so consistent with reason, will allow himself to doubt or dispute, the true and living almighty God, his being the alone creator, ought not only to be reputed (in so far) void of reason, till he advance some solid argument for his opinion; which is impossible: But further justly deserveth to be degraded of the honourable name of a christian, as denying the first and great fundamental article of the christian world's creed. And this deserveth so much the more regard, that it is the natural impression & faith of this article, set

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home upon the conscience, which (when sanctified) very much advanceth the moral dependence and religion, which is amongst men in the world. And hence (*Eccles. xii. 1.*) The believing remembrance of our creator is enjoyn'd in our youth, as one great founding principle of all religion. In fine, if once a man, with that old pagan, come to say, (*Exod. v. 2.*) *Who is the Lord?* He will next very soon natively subjoin—that I should obey him.

Secondly, As another evident and solid inference from this doctrine of creation, let us behold with the greatest love, praise and admiration, the inconceivable fulness of the God-head, from whence such a world, with all its fulness hath sprung: The universe with its all; being not only originally from him, but infinitely in him; so that after, he should create a thousand worlds (were it the divine pleasure) the whole influential fulness, contained in them all, would not bear the proportion of one drop, unto the great ocean of his essential fulness. For, the smallest drop, doth really lessen the ocean, whereas upon the seventh day, the divine essential fulness, was really and individually the same, it was before the first. The reason is obvious, because creation, is not a communication of the divine essence; but an emanation of the virtue of the Deity. God by an almighty, irresistible act of his will, calling things that are not, as though they were; he himself still remaining unchangeably the same. Briefly, it is evident, that the power which produceth a world out of nothing, can never diminish the essential perfections of the infinite agent.

Reader, who possibly can allow, but a few serious thoughts upon God's rearing up this great universe out of mere nothing; and upholding it without pillar or foundation; and as influencing or ruling all events in it, from the greatest

to the most minute, these five thousand years and upwards: And in all this, absolutely independent of all, and yet all dependent upon him; yea, and all this without the least variableness or shadow of turning: I say who is it can seriously reflect on these great performances, and not cry out, with *Zophar*, *Canst thou by searching, find out God, Job xi. 7*

If *Peter*, (*Luke v. 8.* upon a sight of one single act of the divine power, in the great draught of fishes, cryed out, *Lord, depart from me*; what behoved thou, to have done, hadst thou been an eye witness, to this great agent, in the six days work; while God passed by, proclaiming the glory of the creating perfections? Wouldst thou not have been obliged with *Moses*, to have gone into the cleft of the rock, lest some ray of such infinite glory, had consumed thee; and as fearing lest creating power had annihilated thee, or its awful majesty overwhelmed thee?

In sum, he is the incomprehensible God, past all finding out, *Job xi. 7.* For, having no infinite mind (save his own) able to search out the almighty unto perfection. He is under a glorious necessity of forming imperfect ideas of himself even to the most comprehensive of intelligent beings: And therefore the most perfect contemplation, which the wisest of angels or men, can have of him, beareth only proportion to their finite understanding, but not to the real divine essence, as it is in its infinite perfections. And hence, when God beholdeth the most glorious angels, even in their clearest and highest conceptions of him, he really humbleth himself, in beholding the same, *Psal. cxiii. 6.* Their most perfect views, being far below the divine fulness and glory. In fine, God only comprehendeth himself.

As a clear proof of this, how doth the finite

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mind instantly confound and shake, as soon as it beginneth to dare to enquire into the reasons of the Deity's eternity, independency, self-sufficiency, unity in essence, and trinity of persons : Behold how the strongest mind instantly fails and becometh darkness. Reason, indeed, in viewing the creation, cannot rest satisfied, till it ascend, and center upon an eternal independent being, as the first cause : But when it further presumeth to enquire into the particular manner : asking, how any being can be eternal, independent, self-sufficient ; & how three persons really distinct, can subsist in one individual essence ; then justly its finite weak eye, dazzleth & confoundeth, as looking upon an object in perfection and glory. infinitely above it. *Vain man would be wise, Job. xi. 12.* In fine therefore, let us remember aspiring, sinking *Adam*, and be afraid : And with the deepest humility and highest adoration, seal up our thoughts of the Deity, with *Agur's* just exclamation of old—*What is his name, or his son's name, if thou canst tell ? Prov. xxx 4.*

Reader, whoever thou be, I cannot accountably conclude this inference without demanding of thee, is this God, thy God ? If so, thou art infallibly happy : Or art thou not yet reconciled ; thou art infallibly miserable. Reason cannot longer deny, but his favour must be heaven, and his wrath must be hell : And must also firmly assent to that great truth, that whom he blest, shall be blessed ; and whom he curseth, shall be cursed, *Num. xxiii. 8, 9.* Canst thou, O earth worm, who was but yesterday nothing, canst thou be party for this great God ? I tell thee in his name, *if once his wrath be but kindled a little, blessed are all they, that have put their trust in him, Psal. ii. 12* O therefore, seriously and impartially consider, if thou hast seen a transcendant glory in him, darkning all temporal

temporal portions? hath thy soul in earnest said to him only, be my God I refer the terms to thyself? Or hath thy love to him, and respect to his glory, made thee to loath thyself, and mourn for the contrariety of thy nature and life, to his holy nature and law? Hast thou cordially blessed him for his son the Lord Jesus Christ, desiring nothing more, than to feel the powerful execution, of the great three-fold mediatory offices upon thy soul? And to confirm all, hast thou an exercising concern, upon thy spirit to obey, please and honour this God, in the whole of thy conversation? If thus matters stand with thee, infallibly he is thy God, and with him, grace and glory, and every good thing (*Psal.* lxxxiv. 11) shall become thine.

But to pass from the incomprehensible essential fulness; let us next take a view of the streams of the influential; which are shed abroad through the creation. Great is the world's fulness; and that, whether we consider the kind influences of the heavens; the rich and yearly harvests of the earth; the great and various product of the sea and rivers: The numberless fowls of the air; the flocks of a thousand hills; the nourishing lower plants; the taller cedars and strong oaks: the juicy olive and chearing vine: the imbellished mountains of gold and silver; the rich coasts of pearl; the bespangled rocks of precious stones: I say, who possibly can survey all these, and not say amen to *Gen.* xvii. 1. I am God all-sufficient; and to *Hag.* ii. 8. *the silver is mine and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts.* All which being considered,

Surely they that *seek the Lord*, can want no good thing, *Psal.* xxxiv. 10. for, seeing the earth, and all this its great fulness, is the Lord's, both in point of creation, possession and disposal, *Psal.* xxiv. 1. It is not possible for reason, to suppose,

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that the frequent low condition of the godly, can arise from any other cause, but the divine wisdom and love, consulting their real good: It being now evident that it can neither be lack of treasure, nor want of good-will, God having not spared his own son, even unto death for them. *Rom. viii. 32.*

From all which, it necessarily follows, that the true and most solid way, in all the world, for securing such a portion of temporal blessings, as is really best for us (infinite wisdom being judge) must be, to seek; first, this all-sufficient God to be our God; for in having him, and a special covenant interest in him; we secure all; because having once given himself, he can begrudge nothing. This is the true import, of that comprehensive and wise precept, *Matth. vi. 33. First, seek the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, and all these things shall be added unto you.* Few, I know, believe the latter clause, but reason itself cannot refuse it; for to suppose, God would give himself, and yet withhold some real good, is blasphemously to make the Deity to esteem something more than himself. But if reason want satisfaction, about the discouraging, ordinary mean condition of many of the people of God; please only consider, that a principal part of man's corruption, consists in a carnal bias, loving the creature, more than God: And therefore, as a most wise and proper antidote against this insinuating and ensnaring evil; *great things* in this life, must not be the ordinary allowance, even of the favourites of heaven, *Prov. xxx.*

9 Briefly, a little true holiness, conforming us to God, being a greater good, than great temporal happiness: The advancing of the former, must argue the greatest love. *It is good for me, that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes, Psal. cxix 71.* Is a truth, to which, true and solid reason must and will assent; whatever carnal reason

reason, corrupted by the sensual appetite, murmur against it. In fine, the conclusion of all is, let us make sure the fountain, and the streams will infallibly and natively follow, *Psal.* xxiii. 1. But to proceed in the application,

Let us come to the last and principal inference, in which we are also so deeply concerned: And that is, seriously to consider, That seeing God is the great first cause and fountain-being, that then certainly, he must be the supream and chief good: To clear which, let us consider, that first he must be such in himself, seeing all the excellencies and perfections to be found in the whole creation, from the highest archangels to the smallest atom, are altogether from him, as the fountain. The angels, that excel in knowledge, holiness, power, and glory, are his: So also Adam in all the wonderful perfections of his soul and body, in the state of innocence, was the workmanship of his hands. *Solomon's* great excellencies of unparalleled wisdom, dominion, treasures and grandeur, were all, the consequents, of his wise and acceptable prayer to this God. *1 Kings.* iii. 10, 11, 12. The glorious fountain of light and virtue in the sun above; The seminal powers of the earth below; all these have his fingers framed. But this is not all, for as all these were originally from him, so they are infinitely in him. He could (were his glory concerned) multiply worlds like the stars of heaven: This one, cost him only, a divine *Let it be*, and when he spoke; a thousand as easily as one, would have appeared, had the divine will, but once so decreed. So that this great actual world, with all its fulness, is very nothing, and less than nothing, in comparison with the infinite creating fulness and virtue in the Deity, *Isai.* xl. 17.

But, to bring this inference closer home: As God is such in himself, so by his being man's creator,

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tor, he hath particularly demonstrated his being man's chief good. For reason cannot but conclude, that since God is the alone author, of the human nature, in all its powers and Capacities ; It is thereupon impossible, that man should be capable of enjoying another or greater blessedness, than what must necessarily be in him that so created and composed him : for as the effect can never excel the cause, so the creature in its powers and capacities to enjoy, can never transcend the powers and fulness of the creator to bestow ; otherwise the effect must have greater perfections than the cause, which is impossible ; for from whence should it have them, but from the cause, upon which it is absolutely dependent, and at first received it's being ? All which being considered,

I cannot but beseech the reader, solidly to believe the joint voice of scripture and reason, to wit, That God only, is in very deed, the *Fountain of living waters*, and that all other portions, are but *broken cisterns*, which can hold no water. *Jer. ii. 13.* *Abraham's* All sufficient God in Christ, is the only compleat match for the human nature, which is to be immortal in soul and body both, through eternity. Briefly it is only he who can cloath thee, with a perfect righteousness, fully pardon thy sins, give solid peace to thy conscience, perfectly restore his image on thy soul ; and who can conquer all thine enemies, comfort thee at death, give thy body a glorious resurrection, thy person a solemn acquittance before the tribunal ; and who can crown all with an eternity of immediate vision of the divine fulness and glory, together with a perfect fruition of the divine love in Christ, producing inconceivable satisfaction to the mind, and joy unspeakable to the will, *Psal. xvi. 11.* And therefore let reason now, if it can, produce a portion amongst the whole creation, that may once pretend,

pretend, to perform one of all these, for sinful, miserable man ; and if so, much less can it make comparison with this All-sufficient, infinite God.

As for the whole of temporal blessings, contained in riches, honor and pleasures, as in their highest and best improvement, they can only amount to convenient journey bread in the wilderness ; so in their nature, they are gross and perishing ; no ways adjusted to the wants, desires, capacities, of a spiritual immortal soul ; which by the fall was robbed of the divine favor, image, and fellowship ; and can never rest in any portion, but such as will restore these again unto it. Besides, if God do but touch the clay a little disordering it's natural powers ; how quickly doth the greatest worldling, and happiest sensualist, loath what they admired and idolized before ? *Psal. cvii. 17. 18.* It is true, with the dog they may return to the vomit, but this is only owing to the blindfolding and bewitching nature of sin, which makes man a fool, even after he hath been beat in the mortar, with a pestil, *Pro. xxvii. 22.*

To conclude, man ! thou must die ; a most reasonable and necessary proof of the justice and holiness of the Deity. Man being at first, raised out of the dust, to glorify God, by perfect love and obedience, how just and equal is it, that man turning rebellious, should return to the dust again. So die thou must. For, if sin, when but imputed, obliged the son of God, to undergo death, how much more shall a cursed mass of inherent corruption, and great personal actual guilt, bring thee an earth worm down to the dust. Accordingly all the preceeding generations, and different ranks and qualities of men in them, since *Adam*, where are they now ? The Antediluvian patriarchs with their 800, 900 years, promising (as it were) to write the epitaph of the world, are now gone, as if they
never

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never had been, or as if they had died from the womb. The *Great Cæsars*, where are they? Are not their faces hid in the dust, and their imperial batons lying now under their heads? And doth not a little dust now cover and conquer conquering *Alexander*? Briefly, *Dives* equally with *Lazarus*, must obey this inevitable summons, unless thou canst shew some personal discharge from heaven of this war, *Eccles* viii. 8. For even those for whom Christ died, must die, as a standing memorandum of the divine indignation against sin.

Upon the whole therefore, let us realize, that certain Great Climacterick in which the last of our numbered days shall infallibly come; in which we must step out of time, and enter in upon eternity; appearing before that great God, who (when but intimating the law) made Mount *Sinia* shake and tremble; and thereupon let us reason seriously a little with our souls, how in that day, the greatest riches can be no price for the soul's redemption; seeing reason can never believe, that gold or silver, the *dust of the footstool*, can be of any value unto the Deity, upon the throne. Besides, God being infinite, sin necessarily must be an infinite offence; and on the other hand, being essentially and perfectly just, requiring a satisfaction, bearing full proportion to the offence, it's impossible, any finite performance or price, can ever purchase reconciliation. (*Psal.* xlix. 78.) *let not then the rich man trust in his riches, Jer.* ix. 23.

Again, as to honour and grandeur, God being the most high, independent of all, and in the reverence of none; and withal being perfectly just; there will, there can be no respect of persons with him: And therefore undoubtedly he will impartially render to every man according to his works, 2

Cor.

Cor. v. 10, 11. He is the God, that dethron'd great Nebuchadnezzar, classing him with the beasts of the field, till he spoke out of the dust unto him, and own'd his kingdom to be over all, Dan. iv. 33, 34. Briefly, God having made of one blood, (Acts xvii. 26) all nations and ranks of men: It must of necessity be some thing supernatural, above any difference of blood, or ancientness of charters, that will distinguish persons in that great and impartial day; when the bar before the great white throne will infallibly level all mankind, Rev. xx 11, 12. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great stand before God; and the books were opened: And another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. Again, if we shall proceed.

To consider, sensual pleasures of all kinds, it is certain, that decaying and dying nature, causing all the senses intirely to flag, can relish no sweetness or satisfaction in them; The silver-cord being once broken, nature is unhinged. The wine may indeed continue to move itself aright in the glass, and give it's colour, *Pro xxiii. 31.* But the melancholy eye, staring in upon eternity, and the trembling hand can now take no satisfaction, nor make any improvement. The inspiring notes of voice and vial, may be in themselves as pleasant as ever. But now the very noise of the grass-hopper, and weight of the thin linen is become a burden. And as for the nicest and most savoury preparations, they are now loathed, yea the very mentioning of them in hazard to overwhelm the sickish spirits. In fine, as to all pleasures that can be nam'd, dying man intirely becometh Solomon's proselyte

Eccles.

Eccles. 1. 2. vanity of vanities, all is vanity. And therefore allow me to address lovers of pleasures, more then lovers of God. Can reason itself, possibly approve of your Choice? Are they not, only for a season, while you are immortal? Pray therefore, be not so unequally yoked. And seriously ponder again and again, that grave and weighty ironical expostulation, *Eccles. xi. 9.* Wherein God justly mocketh at sinners, for the unaccountableness of this choice: *Rejoice O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things, God will bring thee unto judgment.* O then consider where will all temporal portions be, in that solemn morning, wherein heaven and earth are to be in a flame? (*2 Pet. iii. 10.*) and the whole of men's thoughts intirely upon the inquiry, what to answer him, who is to sit as *supream judge* upon the great throne?

But perhaps reader, thy genius hath not led thee so much to those idols of riches, honor and pleasures: but thy soul being little more refined and elevated, literature and the pleasure of knowledge arising therefrom, hath been more thy study. And if so, I must tell thee, that however, thou hast in so doing, acted more suitably unto the intelligent rational constitution of the human soul, and in so far been happier, than the former, in their grosser enjoyments, yet in a dying hour, suppose thou shouldst be found to excel in all natural, moral and political knowledge, the human understanding is capable of; yet if this thy knowledge, hath not been of that saving efficacious kind, as actually and powerfully to determine thy will, to choose God in Christ for thy chief portion and happiness, and causing thee habitually to love him above all, and from love to keep his commandments; I can assure thee,

thee, in the Lord's name, all thy knowledge, will only be found to have been the precious stone in the head of the toad, which never altereth it's poisonous nature ; And therefore still (notwithstanding of thy great knowledge) thou shalt be altogether unfit for enjoying a holy God, in that holy city, where nothing that defileth can enter, *Rev. xxi. 27.*

Yea more, all the advantage thou shalt have by all thy great natural and acquired accomplishments, shall only be, to be reckoned, the servant, who knew his Lord's Will, and yet did it not, and therefore liable to double stripes, *Luke xii. 47.* Briefly, upon a death bed, thy being the wisest naturalist, having universal nature in it's greatest phænomena unveil'd unto thee ; Thy being the greatest statesman in the age, perfectly acquainted with the whole of poliiticks, lawful and unlawful, in the grand rules and principles thereof, together with the wise variation to be observed in their application, according to the different nature and circumstances of the principal design : Yea more, suppose thee, the only great divine, in the whole church, speaking with the tongues of men and angels, speculatively understanding all mysteries, and all knowledge, in the book of God (*1 Cor. xiii. 1. 2.*) Yet if supernatural regenerating grace, hath not so illuminated thy mind, as to discover God in Christ, to be the chief and great, good, engaging thy soul, thereupon cordially to make him thy beloved ; and since that choice, if the same grace hath not constrain'd thee to offer thy all unto him, and to aim to glorify him with thy all ; thou art but a sounding brass and tinkling cymbal ; in short a meer passive tool (however polished and useful in thy station) over-ruled and used as a servant, to divine providence in thy generation, deserving no reward from God, for thy selfish
love

love and service : Thou having never from sincere love fought his glory in any one action of thy life : But upon the contrary, self hath been thy God, in the whole ; yea even, in the seemingly religious part of thy conversation. Believe it then, the great and wise God, will be infallibly glorified, actively by, or passively upon all the children of men, *Prov. xvi. 4.*

The conclusion of all this reasoning, is, the special love of God the father ; the only spring of all true blessedness ; the glorious image of our Lord Jesus Christ, the highest perfection of our nature ; the communion and fellowship of the holy ghost ; the sweetest enjoyment ; together with an eternity of all these, in the everlasting kingdom, can only make up a suitable and compleat portion, for rational immortal man. As upon the contrary, if these be wanting in the critical hour of time's exchange with eternity ; in that case, thy soul can never know good ; but upon the other hand, only be filled with despair and trembling, upon the certain prospect of eternal banishment, from the glory and joy of the divine presence : And thereupon begin and sink under the fearful impress of the divine holiness, justice, power and wrath, as set home by an awakened evil conscience, condemning thee ; because of thy dishonouring God and his law ; despising Christ and his gospel ; and thy quenching the spirit, in his motions ; and in sum, for thy making, self, thy God and last end.

Allow me therefore in the bowels of a gracious God to beseech all that have read the premisses, seriously to ponder the same ; and reflect how deeply you are concerned therein. It is not a matter of indifference, to live without a saving interest in *This GOD* ; far less to die so : But above all to have him, sit down as supreme judge, in the great day, and to have his justice and holiness inflaming
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his power, and his power and jealousy kindling his wrath : who I say in that day, will undertake to describe the power of the same, or to unfold the misery of its object ? *Psal. xc. 11.* O therefore, thinking foul, lift up thy voice, and bless this long-suffering God, that he is yet thus importuning thee ; thou mightest justly have been long ere this time, in the place, where the divine patience and grace hath no being, and yet God at the same time, equally blessed and glorious, with what he is now. He wants not thee, but thou him. Be deeply therefore ashamed of this monstrous neglect of the divine goodness.

And to encourage thee, to be serious in this great concern, consider how condescending God is towards thy coming by a sure and saving interest in him. Only from the soul say to God in Christ, *Whom have I in heaven but thee : Or in the earth whom I desire besides thee, Psal. lxxiii. 25.* Or if thy love be not so lively and evident, as what thou wouldst have it, then from the heart cry, *draw me, song. 1. 4.* And if still to thy grief, a cold backward heart remain, then with all the seriousness, thou canst attain to, lift up thy voice with *Ephraim, Jer. xxxi. 18.* and cry, *Turn thou me, O Lord, and I shall be turned.* In short, with the wise merchant, *Mat. xiii. 43. 44.* solemnly and seriously, *Go to God in Christ,* allowing some few hours for eternity, and first declare, that now thou hast found out the *pearl of great price*, and art persuaded in thy soul, that in himself, and in him only, man's true and compleat happiness lies ; and that besides him, all other portions are very vanity ; seeing it is only in Christ, thou canst find wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. And next thereupon be ashamed and mourn before him, for thy former blindness, forgetfulness, mean thoughts and contempt of such

an infinitely glorious and all-sufficient God. And lastly without any further delay, cry out for a day of saving power to enable thy soul, to an actual cordial choice of him for thy God and portion in time and eternity : saying, *Only be my God, and give grace to love thee much, and from love to live greatly to thy glory ; upon which, I cheartfully refer all my other concerns to the absolute disposal of providence.* This is the true gospel way of selling all to purchase the *pearl of great price* : Which if once truly done, then infallibly thou hast joined thyself to the Lord, in a covenant, which thy God will make everlasting. *I love them that love me.* (*Pro. xviii. 17.*) will certainly prove an eternal truth. Thou hast hearkened, inclined the ear, and come unto him, and therefore God hath surely made an everlasting covenant with thee, *even the sure mercies of David.* *Isa. lv. 3.*

And now you appealers to reason : God the father, son and holy ghost, being man's creator, the alone author of his being, perfections and enjoyments ; can reason longer refuse to cry out, that *true practical religion*, as consisting in a superlative love to God ; a cordial embracing of his son in all his redeeming offices, an affectionate tender entertaining of the motions and dictates of his holy spirit ; and all these evidenced by an universal practical respect unto his commandments ; must certainly be the most accountable conversation and reasonable way of living, the human nature is capable of. Be persuaded then, either to become more truly religious, in your principles and practice ; or else take it not ill, if you be justly accounted, the persons furthest from true and solid reason, in its genuine principles and precepts, of all others in the world. Yea it is certain, that all mankind one day will subscribe, *That the fear of God is the beginning of Wisdom.* *Pro. ix. 10.* In fine,
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That moment, a soul beginneth sincerely to love and fear God, then, and not till then, *true wisdom* commenceth. He only is the fool, that saith in his heart, *There is no God*, and who thereupon corrupteth his Way, *Psal. xiv. 1, 2.*

CHAPTER IV.

Having seen God as the glorious creator of both worlds, let us proceed to admire him as the all-wise governor of so great an universe. The wonderful preservation, of the material world briefly considered, together with the harmonious concurrence of second causes therein. God the first cause, moveth and absolutely over-ruleth all. The far more remarkable and wonderful conduct of divine providence, towards angels and men, falls next under consideration. To find out which, the eternal, divine decrees, relative to both, must be considered. These decrees as to what they are in the deity, explained. Their eternal spring giving rise unto them, in the order of nature discoursed. In this inquiry, two things are found, 1. That even those divine perfections, which were manifested by creation, may yet further, be more gloriously displayed, by the procedure of providence. 2dly, That some divine perfections still remained, as yet, latent and obscure; even after the whole works of creation were finished. Accordingly the divine sovereignty, justice and mercy, plead for a special consideration in the foresaid decrees. The divine sovereignty described. It is undeniable unto the deity. God's great jealousy over the glory of this high perfection. Its procedure in relation to angels and men: As 1. Its acting with respect to the disposal

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sal of the whole temporal interests and concerns of both. 2dly. The false scheme of divine predestination; as offered by carnal reason; in relation to the eternal state and condition of angels and men is considered. Several false and groundless prejudices, against the doctrine of divine predestination, discoursed and answered: Such as 1. The alledging of the deity's being absolutely mercy, without justice: And 2dly, That whatever of justice be with the Deity, that yet mercy, is so essential unto the divine nature, that there can be no divine decree of reprobation.

WE have now heard of the creation of the higher and lower worlds, the one possessed by angels, and the other by men; and therein have seen the deity, as the almighty creator; Let us next proceed to consider and admire him as the all-wise governor of both worlds. Infinite wisdom, power and goodness, must not center in meer creation.

Leaving then, the starry and ærial heavens with their influencive powers, unto the conduct of the settled ordinances thereof; known only to him that made them; *Job. xxxviii. 33, &c.* And the more gross and fixed parts of the creation here below, to be preserved easily in being by the same word of power, which called them at first out of nothing: and committing the various vegetables and minerals, unto the celestial powers in their different motions and situations; in conjunction with the terrestrial; as influencing the different seasons of the year, with their various products, *Jer. xxxiii. 25.* Referring also the sea to struggle in vain with its swaddling band the sand, and to come and go at the pleasure of the mighty and variable wind; But withal regularly to obey, the mysterious egress and regress of the great fountains and depths

depths below, *Job. xxxviii. 10, 11.* And lastly, leaving the animal creatures, unto the government of their various natural instincts, so deeply impressed in their curious (though comparatively coarse) imaginations; referring, I say, the conduct of all these grosser parts of the creation unto the settled natures and powers of their several proper second causes, upon which they immediately depend: But still in a necessary subordination unto an absolute over-ruling influence from the first cause; yea and that in the most minute of their motions; even to the falling of a sparrow to the ground, *Matth. 10. 29.* Or of a dog's moving his tongue (*Exod. xi. 27*) against *Israel* in their coming (tho, at night) out of *Egypt.* Thus by him all things consist that is, are preserved and disposed, *Col. i. 17.* All then, that remains, is, next to take under consideration, the more remarkable conduct of divine providence, towards angels and men.

To find out which, the eternal decrees concerning both must be consulted. In conceiving of which aright, we must remember these two, *first*, That all things depending upon the divine will, in their being, and operations; the divine mind, must certainly know and order what he willeth; again 2dly, That as the divine attributes, (as they are in God) are all one; The deity being absolutely free of all composition: So also the whole divine decrees, relative to angels and men, and all future events, as seated in the eternal mind and will, are without all multiplicity of thoughts and purposes, and free of all succession, as to time. It being only finite angels and men; not an infinite God, who must think and resolve on the end, and then on the means, and so by reasoning infer and determine one thing from, and in consequence upon another. Hence God by *Eliphaz* justly challenged *Job xv. 8.* If the secret of the Lord was with him? To

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wit, the infinite, incomprehensible way of understanding and counsel, which is with the deity. It was also this knowledge, that was too high for David (*Psal.* cxxxix. 6.) to comprehend.

Therefore, however the divine decrees, to our finite minds; be innumerable, according to the multiplicity of their objects: Yet as in God, they are not so: Being only, *one eternal intuitive comprehensive view in the infinite mind, of what creatures, and what performances or events relative to them in time and eternity, would be for the glory of the adorable trinity, and for the praise of the great perfections of the divine nature; and accordingly the eternal divine will, sovereignly and immutably decreeing and appointing the same.* Thus at once known unto God were all his works from the beginning, *Acts* xv. 18. And (*All*) things are wrought after the counsel of his own will, *Eph.* i. 11. This one comprehensive, and to us incomprehensible divine act and decree, being pregnant with the whole creation and all the events relative thereto: We of necessity, by reason of the finite, dark, slow and gradual way of human acquisition of certain knowledge, must divide and subdivide the several divine purposes, respecting angels and men, contained therein.

In order to which, the eternal springs in the deity, giving rise in the order of nature, unto the foresaid decrees, must be a little considered. In reflecting on which,

The first thought which (under the conduct of divine light) offereth itself on this head, must certainly be: That infinite wisdom being consulted in the beginning of the whole of God's way, *Prov.* viii. 22. Whether as to creation or providence; the said wisdom undoubtedly proposed, that as the glory of the deity was justly made the *ultimate end*
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of creation. *Prov* xvi. 4. So now it was also highly reasonable (the agent being the same, and about to do yet more wonderfully) that his declarative glory, should be yet more highly advanced, by the works of providence. This being all the return a deity already infinite in glory and blessedness, was capable of. Infinite wisdom must make progress: The second eternity (I mean a *parte post*) must be more glorious than the first, otherwise the great intervening works of creation and providence are lost.

How to accomplish this; two means natively offered themselves; *first*, that some divine excellencies not as yet declared in the deity, by the works of creation, nor gloriously displayed, should be now in the works of providence, towards angels and men, particularly considered and exalted. *2dly*; That all the perfections already discovered, in the works of creation, but withal capable of a further manifestation, should be displayed by some higher and more glorious operations: That so in due time, the glorious climax or gradation of the divine praise may be accomplished, and perfected. The seventh day for praising the glorious creator, must give way to the first for praising the more glorious and wonderful redeemer, *Isai*. ix. 6. And the song of the morning stars at the first creation, must be turned into a musing and deep poring upon the far more glorious and surprizing incarnation and death of the son of God, in order to man's redemption, *Job* xxxviii. 7. Compared with 1. *Pet*. i. 12. And in fine, at the long run, the Lord's day itself must give place unto the everlasting sabbath, for singing the perfect hallelujahs due unto the fulness and completion of the divine love in Christ, *Rev*. v. 9, 10.

These two proposals, evidently promised so much towards the glory of the deity, (the just and ultimate

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mate end of all the divine purposes and performances) that it is clear, they could not but be acquiesced in.

Accordingly upon this, it being found, that, however, creation work, had gloriously manifested the divine wisdom, power and goodness, yet there remained some other perfections in the deity, equally glorious and dear unto him, not as yet displayed, in their operations ; such as, the divine sovereignty, justice and mercy : And that therefore in the works of providence, the glory of those attributes should be particularly consulted. And with all it being again found, that the objects proper for those perfections to act upon, must first be intelligent ; to acknowledge a sovereign : And 2dly, reasonable, to become subjected unto a just law : 3dly, fallible, and so capable of needing mercy : Angels and men were accordingly fixed upon, as the only proper objects of the glorious displays of those divine perfections. In discoursing of which, let us begin with,

The divine sovereignty, that great pearl in the deity's crown ; whereby as creator of angels and men, and the alone author of their all ; he hath an *undoubted, absolute right and power, to dispose of them, and their all in time and eternity, whatever way he seeth most for his glory.*

For, God being in himself, the first and the alone eternal independent being, who only could be, and is the first cause ; sovereignty must be, essential unto him, upon the supposition of proper objects, to exercise the same upon. For he who is first, as the alone efficient cause of all, cannot but have an indisputable right to be the last, in point of end ; even to dispose all things for his own glory, *Prov. xvi. 4.*

Again, as to the actual exercise of this sovereignty, how evident is it ? according to the model of
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human apprehension of things divine ; that upon God's finishing the higher and lower worlds, and planting angels and men in them ; that upon the very first view, which God had of both, that he could not instantly and justly see himself, the most high, having an unquestionable claim and title to be the sovereign disposer and governor of both worlds. And more especially of angels and men, as having cost the deity most contrivance and performance, as being capable above all the creation besides, of returning him the greatest glory. Moreover the deity, being infinite in holiness and righteousness, and so not capable of wronging the creature, by any degree or act of his providence : As also being infinite in wisdom, and so not capable of any mistake, as to proper means in disposing and over-ruling his creatures for their just ends : I say considering, all these things, what possible objection can remain against God's acting, as the great sovereign of angels and men ? Briefly, could he once have said to both ? You are yet meer nothing ; come forth and declare your being, if ye can ? And shall an absolute power to use them, as he pleaseth, for his glory, be refused him.

And as to man, had any person stood by and seen the piece of rude clay in the creator's hand, of which he made him ; and had been asked by God, may I not most justly and reasonably, make this a vessel for the glory of which of my attributes I please : Could any with the least pretence of reason, have denied that right and power unto God ? Briefly, both the light and law of nature, confirmeth, that as creation is God's giving being to a creature that was nothing ; so fundamentally, it devoteth back the creature to the absolute disposal of the creator. The author of our being, must certainly have an undeniable right to determine the special end thereof, and particularly which of the

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creators excellencies, we shall ultimately glorify. Monstrous clay ! First give thyself being, and next command thy preservation therein ; or else be ashamed at once both to blaspheme God, and give reason the blush, in saying,---*Why hast thou made me thus, Rom. ix. 20.*

Let none then wonder that God insisteth so much in his word on this just and high claim of the deity ; his sovereignty ; frequently asserting himself, *The most high ; only potentate : King of kings ; Lord of lords, 1 Tim. v. 16.* Doing according to (his will) in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. And that none can stay his hand, or (justly) say unto him, What doest thou ? *Dan. iv. 35.* And that *He is over all, God blessed for ever, Rom. ix. v.* Let none, I say, wonder at this ; for first it is the foundation of all the divine decrees, and providential operations in the world ; so that upon its falling, all falls. *2dly*, It is the grand formal reason in the deity, calling for, and influencing adoration, reverence and obedience among angels and men : It being God's creating all things to be disposed and governed at his pleasure, that causeth him to be proclaimed worthy, to receive glory, honour and power, *Rev. iv. 11.* And hence also the sum of worship taught us by our Lord in that great directory for prayer, issueth principally in a cordial and practical acknowledgment of the divine sovereignty, *Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, Mat. vi. 9, 10.* So that any denying this doctrine, do evidently reject that excellent prayer, in it's most substantial part.

In sum, it is the deity's great charter, proving him accountable to none, and holding all accountable to him : So that there is no perfection more worthy of the deity, and in which his glory is
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more concerned. And therefore it is, that any attacks made upon this claim, are so deeply resented and signally punished by him. Behold, what extraordinary displays of this high attribute, did he make upon *Nebuchadnezzar*, not only degrading his political, but confounding his rational life, and classing him with the beasts of the field, till out of the dust, he proclaimed him, *The most high*, whose kingdom was over all, *Dan. iv.* 24. And when *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, quarrelled the divine sovereignty, in distinguishing and anointing *Moses* and *Aaron*, above all others in the congregation of *Israel*: Behold the intervening earth, betwixt heaven and hell, must, amazingly, in the twinkling of an eye, give way for those rebels being sunk and hid, in the lowest pit, out of the sight of this *great sovereign God*, *Numb. xvi.* 31, 32.

Having then by the premises, now seen, this high perfection of sovereignty to be undeniable to the deity, let us next consider its glorious actings and procedure over angels and men, and that first with respect to time, and 2dly, with respect unto eternity.

As for what concerneth the temporal disposal & condition of angels, it not tending much to our present scope, I shall not insist upon it, especially seeing, the election of some of them, the sin and fall of others; together with their different eternal states arising therefrom will more natively fall in to be discoursed, upon the head of the actual execution, of the decrees of sovereignty relative to them: A subject in it's own place, most demonstrative of the present doctrine, and which justly might prove silencing, to the proud ignoble clay, and potsherds of the earth.

Again, as for the actings of sovereignty, towards man with respect to time; his temporal interests
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and conseraments ; it might be here largely insisted upon ; how God by virtue of this attribute, as man's sovereign, hath right ; *first* to number his days, the moment of his birth, and of his death : And *2dly*, to appoint the different places of his habitation : And *3dly*, to make a great difference among men, as to their natural and acquired accomplishments. As *4thly* also, to order and dispose their lot and condition in time, with respect to all the different ingredients and changeable circumstances thereof.

And that the foreknowledge and finger of God, must be thus concerned in men, and their temporal all, is evident from the necessity of a constant, actual divine providential influence, and concurrence ; without which, no man, whether in his natural, rational or religious capacity, could for one minute subsist or act ; It being in God we live, move and have our being, *Act. xvii. 28.* And seeing he performeth and accomplisheth all in time, he must needs certainly have first chalked all out from eternity, as being a God of order, and not of confusion, and who worketh all things, according to the (previous) *council of his own will, Eph. i. 11.*

And therefore as a preface unto sovereignty's greater actings with respect unto our eternal interests, let us take a short view of its procedure with men, even in their temporal concerns. And,

We shall find the divine sovereignty acting and appearing most evidently, this way : And that whether we consider, the great difference among men, as to duration of life, place of habitation, natural and acquired endowments. or their different worldly circumstances and conditions. There is also in it a depth of wisdom, did we but see how exactly all the foresaid four are adjusted in every person, to the several services God designs from them,

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in their generations ; for however it be too great a thought for any finite mind, perfectly to comprehend : Yet certain it is, that at once, the divine sovereignty influenced by infinite wisdom wrote down in the comprehensive eternal decree, first, the exact number of men, that should ever be, from *Adam* to the last of his posterity. And 2^{dly} Class'd them into so many generations. 3^{dly}. Divided those generations into different nations, kingdoms and governments 4^{thly}. In all those different societies, wisely provided the necessary different gifts and accomplishments, for supporting and managing the same ; otherwise, the world could not from age to age have subsisted, in a moral and political sense ; but should have become a chaos and scene, of self-destroying confusion. 5^{thly} Decreed the several great political changes and alterations, upon which, as to many hinges, the more subordinate should turn ; overturning the greatest of monarchies, and most established empires and kingdoms, to make way for subsequent decrees ; as the books of *Daniel* and the *Revelation* make evident, and the progress of time hath now sufficiently confirmed. 6^{thly}. In all these steps, keeping an especial eye upon the being and well-being of his church, both *Jewish* and *Christian*, in her progress through all generations. Lastly, In the whole of this conduct, God so influenceth and over-ruleth the most minute event, with respect to every man in time, from the prince to the peasant ; that in the issue, in the great day, a solid ground work shall be found, to have been laid, for the eternal glory of the divine sovereignty, wisdom, justice and mercy.

Thus of him, and through him, and to him are all things : First of him, in point of contrivance and decree ; and then through him, in respect of providential, powerful influence and concurrence : And to him ; to wit, for the praise and glory of
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the foresaid excellencies ; to whom be glory forever, Amen. *Rom. xi. 36. He also it is, who of one blood, hath made all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed ; and the bounds of their habitation. Act. xvii. 26.* In sum, who saw the whole glorious eternal complex plot, together with its infallible daily and hourly accomplishment, through the whole universe ; he could not but cry out, *Rom: xi. 33, 34. O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out—for who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor.*

But all this procedure of sovereignty, concerneth only time, and men's condition therein, which being but a moment and point in respect of eternity : Let us proceed next to view its determinations and acting with respect to the eternal state both of angels and men : Which decrees & purposes, being more immutable than the laws of the *Medes and Persians*, may justly terminate and give rest unto the thoughts and desires of the human mind, with respect to the most important and concerning future events : And in so far, prove a very pleasant and satisfying subject. *For the counsel of the Lord standeth forever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations, Psal. xxxiii. 11.*

But being now upon a great fundamental truth, the very hinge, upon which, the whole procedure of providence intirely turneth, towards angels and men : And withal, due satisfaction unto solid reason, in this high doctrine being designed ; It may not be improper in the entry, to discourse these two heads : First, The false scheme of the divine procedure in this matter, which carnal reason at first view, is ready to offer ; and 2dly. To consider and lay open the several false grounds of prejudice,

edice, which prepossess the minds of the children of men, against this high and glorious doctrine of divine predestination.

As for the scheme offered by carnal reason, as agreeable to our fond notions of the deity and his manner of decreeing; it is, as follows; to wit, that first, a holy and gracious God decreed, to create angels and men perfectly holy and happy; And next, suitably to his great goodness, resolved to continue his favor towards them, during their obedience. And then lastly, resolved, upon their sinning, to punish or pardon them, according to their impenitency or repentance. All these, reason agreeth unto, as actings very congruous, unto and worthy of the deity, providing we suspend all previous positive determinations and decrees, as to the glorifying of justice or mercy, till the free will of angels and men, should determine the same. Or if there were any such positive eternal decrees, then carnal reason pleads strongly, that certainly it was the divine foreknowledge of the good works of the godly, and of the wickedness of the ungodly which regulated and determined the same, as to the distinguishing the vessels of mercy from the vessels of wrath. This length natural reason will go, but no further: Accordingly, *Cain* went on in religion with *Abel*, till he supposed God to have broken this scheme, in not shewing equal respect to his person and of fering with that of his brothers; being absolutely ignorant of a secret distinguishing sovereignty; in withholding or bestowing justifying faith, as God the undeniable author and disposer of his own grace, thinks fit, *Gen. iv. 5. Heb. xi. 4.*

This plan so pleasing to short-sighted carnal reason: Solid and deliberate reason, upon a little reflection can no ways approve: Because, to suppose the eternal, immutable, absolute, particular
decrees,

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decrees, concerning both the temporal and eternal states of angels and men ; but only conditional, to wit, that according to their continuing obedient or disobedient, so accordingly matters should go with them ; and so suspending all upon their own free-will ; is *first*, blasphemously to affirm, that God was uncertain, whether or not he would bestow so much of actual grace upon them, as would sufficiently and intallibly enable them actually to persevere in their original holiness, and consequently to affirm, that God knew not his own will, and the purpose thereof, which is an absurdity, solid reason can never digest ; for, if he did know, why then was the decree made conditional, seeing God infallibly foreknew what length he was to go in bestowing his grace upon man. *2dly*. The aforesaid supposition of conditional decrees and purposes, doth most grossly imply, an absolute dependance of the divine will, upon the will of the creature, so that according to this model of doctrine, angels and men might have said, we will be for the glory of justice or mercy, as we please, and not as God pleaseth ; as our free-will shall choose to sin or obey, fall or stand, so shall God be determined, and not till then. Which is evidently to make the creature absolutely independent of God, and God absolutely dependent upon his creature : which is so exceeding gross, that if reason can once suppose it, it certainly ceaseth that moment to be reason.

And as for the divine foreknowledge of holiness or wickedness, with angels or men, it is most certain, God only foreknew these, according as he decreed to give or restrain grace ; the divine will being the only spring of grace, so that these depended upon the decrees, as being their necessary consequent, and so could never be their antecedent ground, or impulsive cause. Briefly, let reason remember, that as it was suitable to the divine righteousness.

teousness and goodness to condemn no man, until actual contempt of the law or gospel, so it was equally suitable to the divine sovereignty and dominion, that the divine will, (& not the angelical or human) should determine, upon whom he would bestow his (own) grace, enabling them to obey & believe, & upon whom not. In fine, if this conditional scheme hold, as proposed by carnal reason, relative to the eternal decrees; then never more let any person, *Luk. xiii. 23.* ask at our Lord, *If there be few that shall be saved*; but henceforth let God ask man, and his free will, who they are shall be saved? And who they are shall perish? By all which we may clearly see what a bad judge carnal reason is, in this matter, as will yet further appear, in our discoursing the second head, to wit,

The several false grounds of prejudice, which prepossess the carnal minds of the children of men, against the doctrine of God's eternal, sovereign, holy and wise decrees relative to angels and men. Concerning all which grounds of prejudice, I make bold to say, that upon examination, and second thoughts, solid reason, (speaking according to its genuine notions of the Deity) shall instantly disclaim, as being ashamed to patronize or defend them. The false grounds of prejudice against this doctrine are these.

As first, a gross mistake which many fondly entertain of God's being altogether love and mercy, without any punitive justice at all; to be found with him: And that he will never so notice their sins, as to call them to an account, or punish them for the same, if there be but the least superficial desire for mercy upon their part. This notion and impression of the deity, he himself particularly noticeth to be with the children of men, and resenteth the same deeply with great indignation. Let us hear God's own words, *Psal. i. 21, 22.* *These things*

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things hast thou done, and I kept silence : Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself : But I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver. In which words, God is so plain and positive, that his long-suffering patience, with respect unto wicked men, is so far from owing itself unto the want of vindictive justice in him, that in due time, upon their continued impenitence, their sins shall be particularly set in order, in their nature, number and aggravations, and they condignly punished according to the same. So that,

If any man after hearing God's own mind, so fully in this matter, will still fondly (to keep conscience asleep) maintain this principle, of there being no vindictive justice with God, and thereupon cry out against the sovereign, holy and wise divine decrees, issuing in the punishment of impenitent unbelieving sinners, to the praise of that glorious attribute ; certain it is, that man is not capable of giving God more flatly and impudently the lie. More especially considering, that the great expressions of long-suffering, mercy and goodness, which God proclaimeth, *Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7*, He particularly taketh care (for the prevention of mistakes) to qualify all by subjoyning the remarkable clause of his being a God—*Who by no means will clear the guilty. v. 7.*

And if reason be consulted upon this point, it is certain, that considering, that justice (or the rendering to angels and men according to their works by punishing their sin condignly) is undeniably a most glorious perfection in itself, proclaiming the supreme divine majesty, power and holiness ; yea, and without which, the divine hatred against sin, could not possibly appear *ad extra* unto rational creatures : Reason, I say, upon these grounds, must
either

either erect a Deity void of holiness, and who doth not necessarily hate sin, but is of such impure eyes as to behold iniquity ; or else, it must acknowledge God to be equally infinite in this glorious perfection of justice, along with the other glorious essential perfections of the divine nature.

In short, can any man of reason reflecting upon the son of God himself, as swearing great drops of blood in the garden from the inconceivable weight and pressure of the strokes of vindictive justice, which were then upon him ; and all this notwithstanding of the father's infinite complacency in him, and the hypostatical union to support him, yea, and when he was but the elect's surety, being only guilty by consent and imputation ; I say, after these things, is it possible for any rational man, professing to believe the scriptures, to deny vindictive justice, it's being essential unto the deity ? Or will reason ever allow us to suppose, but that God, (if the glory of vindictive justice had not necessarily required our Lord's sufferings) would certainly have spared his only begotten and well beloved son, and have absolutely pardoned his own elect, without any such extraordinary satisfaction. And if his son even as surety, behoved to suffer at this rate ; can reason suppose, that the wicked, impenitent, unbelieving sinner, an apostate portherd, and personally guilty, shall escape the wrath of a holy and righteous God. Pray then, let no sensible thinking man, so far proclaim himself void of solid reason, as to be prejudiced against the holy decrees of divine predestination from such a monstrous supposition, as what a Deity without justice and jealousy amounts unto.

In fine, if any will still retain this fond opinion. they certainly will do well, to get the history of the old world and of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, absolutely

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lutely deleted out of the sacred records : Yea, also, to get a natural conscience eradicated, which universally testifieth amongst mankind, that God, will one day infallibly become the righteous judge of all the earth. And thus having now heard the first groundless prejudice against this doctrine, let us proceed unto,

The second, which hath far more of subtile reasoning in it, and takes much deeper root, with the more knowing and learned ; and that is,

That mercy (as they affirm) being equally essential unto the Deity, with justice, and therefore certainly, it was impossible for God, to conceive or make any eternal decrees, in prejudice of this glorious attribute, essential unto him. And that therefore, there can be no such decrees, as constituteth some men reprobates, while others are the elect and chosen of God : Seeing this would so evidently infringe upon mercy, which is equally essential unto the Deity with justice ; at least so far, as to influence him to render all mankind redeemable through Christ.

In order to the resolving of which difficulty, a little serious and close attention unto the true, genuine and distinct notions of mercy, as predicate or spoken of God, will tend very much to set this matter in clear light. And therefore,

Let us first consider, that though there can be no real difference among the essential divine perfections, as they are in God (he being a most simple and pure being without any composition) Yet in their *egress* and manner of operation *ad extra*, upon their different objects, there may be a very great and considerable variation : as will be evident in the case just now under consideration : For, if we speak of the glorious perfection of justice in the deity, it is so essential unto the divine nature, that upon the supposition of sinning disobedient angels
or

or men, the deity cannot but hate their sin, resent it, & proceed unto the punishment thereof. The true reason of all which is, that God being essentially holy, and righteous, he necessarily hateth sin, and cannot but express his detestation of it, in rendering unto it, according to what it deserveth; (*Hab. i. 13.*) that so he may proclaim, the glory of his supream majesty, holiness, power and jealousy, which would otherways not only lye obscure, but also fall under the greatest contempt, as lying silent without resenting the great dishonour and affront done unto them, by a finiter rebellious worm. Whereas *2dly*, on the other hand, if we speak of the divine mercy, and its manner of egress towards its objects, then matters stand quite otherways, For,

Nothing can be plainer, even to reason itself, than that mercy considered formally as such, differs exceedingly in its nature and notion from justice: It being impossible, for the rational mind to conceive distinctly of mercy, as strictly and formally taken, but at the same time, it must conceive a liberty and freedom in its author, to restrain, or apply it, as he pleaseth: For if the objects of it have a right unto it, pleading and deserving the same at the bestower's hand, then it is no more mercy, but justice and equity. So that it is clear, like the sun at noon-day: That justice and mercy vastly differ, in their manner of egress towards their several objects: justice proceeding necessarily against its object; whereas mercy dependeth upon the sovereign pleasure of him that bestoweth it. Briefly, when angels and men sin, justice cannot but resent their transgression, and proceed to the punishment thereof:

Accordingly, as a demonstration of this truth, the divine justice, hath not cleared one guilty soul amongst sinning angels or men, without a compleat

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satisfaction : By which universality of it's extent (making exception of none) the necessity of its egress against all its objects, cannot shun to be evident. Whereas if we consider mercy, on the other hand with respect unto its objects, behold, the infinite difference. For though the whole of sinning angels and men, became most miserable as being plunged in a depth of misery, pleading upon mercy to take hold of them, and qualifying them to be its objects, had God so thought fit ; yet, it is plain, that first the divine mercy hath no ways extended itself unto the sinning angels : yea not unto *Belzebub* their prince ; That so vindictive justice might be glorious ; and that mercy might be proclaimed absolutely to depend upon the sovereign pleasure of the will of its author, and no ways upon either the cry of the misery of its object, nor upon the most glorious nature, highest character, or most excellent natural qualifications, to be found amongst rational creatures. *2dly* It is no less manifest, that tho' the Son of God hath assumed the human nature, to which all mankind, (so far as it is human) are equally allied, yet mercy, so much dependeth upon the sovereign pleasure of the divine will, that it is but a chosen and select number of mankind, whom the father gave unto the son, to be made partakers through him of pardoning and saving mercy, *John xvii. 9.* yea,

Reason itself, considering how thousands visibly live and die monsters in sin, can never believe universal redemption ; seeing the natural conscience proclaimeth the deity to be holy and just. And therefore certainly, solid reason will never maintain any such principle, as that justice and mercy in the deity, do proceed with an equal necessity, in relation to their several objects ; there not being one guilty angel or man whom justice hath passed, without compleat satisfaction : Whereas there

there are thousands and millions of miserable angels and men, whom mercy hath not once allowed one thought upon. In fine, sin and rebellion obligeth justice to appear and proceed, whereas misery only layeth its object open, if the divine mercy please to embrace : Sin maketh justice necessary, as attacking the glory of the deity, in all his glorious perfections ; but so doth not misery the divine will. When the supream majesty beholdeth rebellion, the divine jealousy cannot but burn. Whereas when he observeth misery, he seeth nothing, but what is most suitable unto the sinner.

If any shall still here object, that, by what is advanced, mercy is not allowed to be equally essential unto the deity with justice ; whereas they still thought, that justice was his strange act, and that mercy was far more nearly allied unto the divine nature. It is answered,

First, If by mercy's being essential unto the deity, be understood, that pardoning saving mercy, so essential unto the divine nature, as that God could not ; but as necessarily pardon and save sinful miserable angels and men, as what he could not, but hate their sin, and resent their rebellion : Then it is absolutely denied, that mercy is thus, or in this sense essential to God : for as the event hath declared ; God having pardoned none of the sinning angels, and but a select number of the children of men, it is evident that God did not shew mercy from any necessity arising from the divine nature, but only according to the sovereign good pleasure and determination of his will, Whereby he sheweth mercy to whom he will shew mercy ; *Exod. xxxiii. 19* But then,

Secondly, That which causeth so many mistakes in this matter, is the wrong and false notions, which many have of mercy, as in the deity, quite

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forgetting, that all the divine perfections, as in God, are one and the same, (though diverse unto our conception) and that therefore, it is absolutely impossible, there should be any mercy in the deity, inconsistent with his pure and perfect justice, there being no contrary or contending perfections in the divine nature. Upon all which, the following discovery in relation to the divine mercy, cannot but become most obvious; to wit, That if we trace mercy, with respect unto God's elect, up unto its original spring in the divine breast, we shall presently find, that it is nothing else, but eternal electing love, giving Christ unto them. in order to his satisfying justice fully for their sins; that so God with the safety of glorious justice, may proceed to pardon, adopt, sanctify and glorify his elect, to the eternal praise of the riches of his grace or free love in Christ unto them. So that the divine mercy (when followed up unto the fountain) is only the electing love in Christ, making way for pardon and salvation by the satisfaction of justice.

Accordingly, The Holy Ghost is most plain in declaring unto us, that justice's consent is absolutely necessary unto our pardon. We are healed, it is true, but at the same time it is by Christ's stripes, *Isa. liii. 5.* Yea the Apostle *John* is so explicit upon this head, as plainly to connect, the pardon of sin with the divine justice and faithfulness, without mentioning mercy at all. His words are, *1. John i. 9. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Intimating clearly, That however much of infinite inconceivable mercy, be in the pardon of sin, as it respecteth and terminateth upon the guilty, miserable, condemned, impotent elect sinner; that yet, as it proceedeth from the deity, upon the meritorious
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account of Christ's compleat satisfaction, unto justice, it is truly and properly the product and performance of justice itself. For though pardoning mercy, formally considered as such, and as terminating upon the guilty miserable object, can never be in the least owing unto justice, which crieth for the payment of the last mite, without the least of abatement, yet the act of pardoning, as proceeding from a deity, who hath received full satisfaction unto justice for that very end, may be founded thereupon. So that upon the whole,

Did rational judicious persons, but seriously and impartially weigh and ponder the divine mercy, as it is really, as in the deity, they could not but be ashamed of pleading any more, that it is so essential unto God, as that he cannot but equally extend the acts thereof unto angels and men, along with the acts of divine justice. And therefore let no pretenders unto solid reason, insist upon the divine mercy, its being inconsistent with the sovereign holy divine decrees, issuing in the praise of glorious justice. It is indeed undeniable that God's love, in giving his only begotten son to the death for the elect, hath a grace and mercy in it, that passeth all understanding: but still at the same time, this great redeeming mercy, must be conveyed through the satisfaction of justice. Our Lord must *pour out his soul unto death*, and then by his knowledge, shall this righteous servant justify many, *Isa. liii. 10, 11, 12.* It is also most certain, that a gracious God doth exercise so much of long-suffering and patience, and use such a variety of means for recalling of sinners, that the actual execution of his justice may be justly termed his strange act; as being that from which he restrains himself for a long time, till once sinners by their sin and continued obstinacy oblige him unto it. But as true it is, on the other hand, that when once his spirit

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hath striven long with men, and they have despised the offers of his grace and mercy, and gone on impenitently under all the calls and means unto repentance and reformation, that then he is the God, who will look upon himself as concerned to display his justice, in destroying even a whole world at once, *Gen. vi. 3. 7.* yea absolutely to unchurch and in wrath reject a people who had been his peculiar habitation, and chosen inheritance for much of two thousand years together. On all which I have insisted a little the more; because,

I know, that it is no small device of satan's at this day, to influence a great many, both from pulpit and press, so to enlarge upon and cry up an absolute love, mercy and goodness in God: (and that without any just and faithful accounts of his glorious sovereignty, pure holiness, perfect justice, and great jealousy,) that instead of men's being duly impressed with their hazard of the wrath to come, or of the great difficulty and concern of salvation work, or with their natural impotency for the same, or the necessity of a supernatural power to sanctify them, or of a perfect imputed righteousness, to render the most holy among men acceptable unto God: The generality in many places are so deeply tinctured with the fond imaginations of absolute love and mercy in God, supposing the deity to be nothing but love and mercy, without any justice at all, or at least, that by his mercy he hath so far made all mankind redeemable by Christ, as upon the least superficial wish or cry for salvation at the last hour, it shall certainly be obtained by any person whatsoever: and withal the same persons are so buoyed up with the doctrines of the power of free-will; that verily there is nothing in the world look'd upon by them, to be necessary to salvation, save, to resolve in a dying

ing hour, to improve their own power towards the turning from sin unto God, and accepting the Lord Jesus Christ offered in the Gospel: They making no manner of doubt, but all this is at their command. All which, if seriously considered, who can but cry out,

What fearful delusion is here, for the ensnaring and ruining of precious souls! Or what sober mind, duly impressed with the fear of the thrice holy God, or calling to mind, the great price of the precious blood of the son of God, necessary for his elect's redemption, or, that, ever with *Ephraim*, was acquainted with the strong plagues of his own heart, hindering him from turning to God, or with the impossibility of getting the darkened carnal mind to discern spiritually, or the obstinate perverse will to consent sincerely unto, and cordially embrace a whole Christ, as prophet, priest and king, till once a day of powerful grace was allowed from on high: I say, what soul truly acquainted with these things, together with the serious deep concern and exercises in salvation work arising thereupon, will not cry out, that the above-mentioned principles, can not possibly be the *strait way* that leadeth unto life; but must be the *broad way* that leadeth unto *destruction*. so that preach the glorious gospel of God, who will! at this rate,

I make bold to say, that they go quite contrary to the grand designs of the same, and that while they are in words exalting and preaching up the great love and mercy of the deity, they are in reality, most effectually disappointing the true praise and glory of the same:

For, by representing the deity thus, to be altogether compassions and bowels, behold first, they evidently rob him of the glory of his great and awful majesty; by the discovery of which, sinners
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are made to discern their creature distance, and thereupon creep in dust (the proper situation for the creature) and speak out of it before him; acknowledging themselves no party for him, and thereupon are glad to betake themselves to his mercy, *Act. ix vi* Again, *2dly*, By making God all love and mercy, they cause sinners quite to forget his great and perfect holiness by a discovery of which in the divine nature and law, men are made to take up their sinful distance, with respect to their great guilt and pollution, and thereupon loath themselves, and begin and cry in earnest for a redeemer, in order to justification and sanctification.

Again, *3dly*, When the divine vindictive punitive justice, is not faithfully declared; but either God given out to be, absolute love and mercy, without any such perfection as justice at all; or at least that justice is no ways to be feared in its execution: Christ according (to them) having died for all: I say, upon these principles, what man will ever either be afraid of the wrath to come, or seriously lay to heart the necessity of regeneration, repentance, faith and true holiness, in order to salvation; more especially when over and above all the aforesaid smoothing doctrines, their preachers carefully subjoin, that man by virtue of the power of his free-will may turn himself unto God when he pleaseth Upon all which is it possible, that such principles can ever tend unto the begetting that conviction, contrition humiliation for sin, which is necessary towards the making way for the soul's cordial esteeming and embracing of Christ? *John xvi 8 9, 10* Surely if they do, our Lord and his great apostles were egregiously wrong, in their measures, while they preached so plainly, that *strait is the way* that leads to life, and few there be that find it, *Matth. vii.*

vii. 13, 14. And that even the righteous themselves scarcely are saved, 1 *Pet.* iv. 18. And that as knowing the terror of the Lord, they endeavoured to persuade men to turn unto him; 2 *Cor.* v. 11. So that upon the whole it is evident, that seeing none will ever praise, or magnify aright the riches of the divine grace and mercy in Christ, but the convicted, contrite, humbled sinner, that then certainly the aforesaid principles never promise the accomplishing of that end.

In short, The true secret spring of this smoothing model preaching up absolute unlimited love and mercy in the deity plainly is, that Satan feeling to sensibly the effects of the faith of divine vindictive justice upon himself, it, causing him (though a mighty and desperate spirit) even to tremble, upon the remembrance of its more compleat and approaching execution, *Jam.* ii. 19 He thereupon envying much, the good effects the faithful declaration of this divine attribute, along with the offers of mercy in Christ, might produce amongst the children of men. he findeth nothing more his interest, than to endeavour and influence to the utmost of his power, the prophets prophesying smooth things, and their causing the holy and just one of *Israel* to cease from amongst their people, *Isai.* xxx 10, 11, 12 In fine, this subtle old speculative divine, knows perfectly the law to be our great pedagogue unto Christ, (*Gal.* iii. 24.) by warning us that there is no salvation, by the first and broken covenant of works; and therefore no wonder if he do his utmost to banish *Boanerges*, or all sons of thunder from the dispensation of the gospel. And thus now we have heard some of the groundless prejudices, against the glorious doctrine, of the sovereign, distinguishing, divine decrees discoursed; but considering that a true scriptural account of the divine procedure

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cedure in election and reprobation, will (of all other means) most effectually remove the several objections against this glorious doctrine, therefore we shall proceed to declare the same in the following chapter,

C H A P T E R V.

Towards a clear illustration of the divine procedure in election, and reprobation, the eternal springs thereof; to wit, The divine sovereignty, justice and mercy, are more particularly opened up: And that; first, in their nature; And 2dly, In the requisite performances, necessary unto the displaying of their glory upon angels and men. Accordingly we shall find the decrees of election and reprobation, to have been most wisely moulded and enacted. As the glory of the essential divine holiness, or moral goodness of the deity, pleadeth strongly, for the exalting of Justice, in the decrees of divine predestination; So the glory of the divine love, or communicative goodness, inviteth greatly unto the glorious displays of the riches of grace and mercy. Accordingly the glory of both, are greatly consulted; and that both upon angels and men. Two great purposes, fall under the divine consideration; in enacting the eternal decrees: As first, how, the divine love, in a sovereign way, may be made most conspicuous and glorious, with respect unto angels, and then 2dly, with respect unto men: The divine resolutions, and determinations, in relation to both. The grand inveterate prejudice against the doctrine of divine predestination, To wit,—Who hath resisted his will, Rom. ix. 19: particularly considered and cleared.

HAVING

HA V I N G now in the preceding chapter considered some groundless prejudices against the glorious doctrine of divine predestination, I shall next proceed (so far as is plainly revealed,) to consider particularly, the whole steps of the divine procedure, in establishing those great decrees of election and reprobation, and that both in relation to angels and men. That so the great noise made at this day, against those great truths, may be clearly seen, not at all, to be the genuine product of true and solid reason, but entirely to flow from the natural darkness, enmity and pride of the carnal mind ; and to be much owing unto gross mistakes, and unto the want of due thought and deliberation, with thousands of them, who are the greatest quarrellers with these glorious doctrines. In order to which, the glory of the divine sovereignty, justice and mercy, being the great spring and mover in election and reprobation, we must of necessity, enquire a little into the nature and import of those divine perfections ; and thereupon examine, what rules, the glory of the said attributes, required to be observed, in God's establishing the eternal degrees, in relation to angels and men. By all which we shall have the very foundation of the high doctrine of the divine predestination, considerably laid open, and declared.

Accordingly, to begin with the consideration, of that high divine attribute of sovereignty : upon a little enquiry, it shall presently become most evident, that the nature and glory of the said attribute as exercised upon angels and men, necessarily required, the following method of procedure, to be strictly observed, in the divine predestination. As first, that in the eternal desposal of angels and men, both of them should be considered, as absolutely void of all merit, having nothing, nor capable

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ble of any thing, but what was and must be first given : for as no meer creature is capable of meriting at the hand of the deity, being dependent in its all upon him ; so had there been any thing considered, whether foreseen obedience or disobedience, with any angels or men, determining, or moving the will of God, as the proper and formal impulsive cause, of his choosing some, and passing by others ; then the choice and disposal, was not the absolute pleasure of the divine will, and consequently sovereignty was lost, and was no more sovereignty ; the determination being no more absolutely of God *that willeth*, Rom ix 15. 16 *2dly*, It was no less necessary for the glory of sovereignty, that in this eternal disposal of angels and men, not only nothing as meritorious, or determining should be considered in the creature, but also that the will or the inclination of the creature should no ways be regarded, but rather neglected, that so sovereignty might shine the more.

Briefly, The pleasure of the divine will as answerable or accountable to none, must here be the only rule. Yea, reason cannot shun to see, but that the clay usurpeth, unaccountably, if it require any vote in this matter ; *What art thou O man that repliest ? Rom. ix. 20.* Art thou the potter or the clay ; to whom the potter can be under no obligation to purify and make a vessel of honor.

Again, *Thirdly*, The glory of sovereignty also required, that the difference made by the eternal distinguishing decrees, relative to angels and men, should be exceeding great and remarkable ; because the wider the difference ; sovereignty becometh the more illustrious ; for had all been determined one way, how then thou'd sovereignty have appeared ? There behoved therefore, to be a sovereign immutable, *I will love and have mercy, and I will not ;*

not ; or the glory of this high attribute sinketh, *Rom. ix. 15.* 4^{thly}, The honor of sovereignty further required, that the eternal distinguishing decrees, should reach even the highest and most glorious among angels and men ; extending unto the very heads of both, even unto the archangel's in heaven, and greatest among men on earth : So that none less than great *Belzebub* and *Pharaoh* must be here. 5^{thly}, It was no less necessary, that the disposal *once* decreed, should prove eternally immutable, in the midst of all the various innumerable intervening events, between its passing and its final execution. The supposal of the least possibility of a change undermineth sovereignty, and converteth the divine will, into a vain resolve. And therefore mercy must not lose the most hellish and wrathlike wretch, amongst the children of men : The thief, dying almost, in justice's arms, and within a hair's-breadth of hell, must fall in mercy's bosom : As on the other hand, the most grace and mercy-like hypocrite, must infallibly fall to justice's share. Accordingly, the non-such Pharisee shall go unjustified, *Luke xviii. 14.*

Having now heard of the nature of the divine sovereignty, and of the glory, honor and majesty of the deity standing or falling, as it is acknowledged or denied by angels or men : Having heard also of the necessary requisites towards its glory in its procedure : we are now come unto the discoursing the great point, to wit, of the most high God's being about to decree and determine, as the great sovereign of angels and men, the special and eternal way and manner of their being for his glory : and thereupon, the great thought, now, to be supposed under the divine consideration, must be ; which of all the divine perfections, shall sovereignty principally take in to be glorified along with itself, in enacting and passing, the eternal
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irrevocable decrees ? For clearing of which, let us consider,

All the divine attributes are most glorious, as being each of them most perfect, yea, infinite in their perfection : yet it is most remarkable, that when the great favourite *Moses* is fervently praying,—*shew me thy glory*, *Exod. xxxiii. 18.* The Lord answered him thus, *I'll cause all my goodness to pass before thee, vers. 19* importing, that in the divine estimate, the divine goodness and glory are reciprocal terms ; & that God looketh upon the divine goodness with a special regard, even as the great glory of the deity ; rendering him first the most excellent and perfect being in himself and next thereupon proclaiming him the most glorious, unto intelligent rational creatures. And therefore in the same 19 *verse*, he calleth (this perfection) *his name*, and telleth *Moses*, he will proclaim it, by *being gracious to whom he will be gracious, and shewing mercy to whom he will shew mercy* : As if the Lord had plainly said unto *Moses*, it is true, I have brought you and *Israel* out of *Egypt*, with an out-stretched arm, separating you unto myself : But withal know, that I am the great and sovereign God, under no obligation to shew mercy unto any of the children of men, yea even unto the members of the visible church, but according to the pleasure of my own will : And therefore, as on the one hand, I will proclaim my glorious communicative goodness or mercy, upon some of the children of men ; so on the other, I will restrain it from others, proclaiming my glorious moral goodness, or essential holiness, justice and righteousness, in the just resentment and condign punishment of their sin.

And thus *Moses* got a discovery of the great and glorious perfections of the deity : which accordingly are more particularly and fully declared
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and proclaimed unto him, in the next chapter *verse* 6, and 7. But still are so qualified, as the communicative divine goodness, must be so regulated, as to act in consistency with the essential moral goodness of the deity : as we shall further hear in its place. And that this is the true import and interpretation of this scripture (without the least wresting) is put beyond all controversy, by the Holy Ghost's explaining it so particularly after this manner, by the Apostle writing to the *Romans*, *chap. ix.* from the 14, unto the 19 *verse*. And therefore,

That we may the better understand this great truth, let us a little dive into the nature and great import of this admirable glorious perfection, termed by the deity his goodness, which *Hebrew* word, as it is translated goodness, so elsewhere it is rendred beauty, excellency or glory, as *Gen. vi. 2. 1 Sam. ix. 2.* And so we may either first consider it, as it pointeth out the infinite moral perfection of the divine nature, even his infinite holiness and righteousness, whereby essentially, necessarily and unchangeably, he loveth all moral good, and hateth all moral evil ; and cannot but act accordingly in the whole of his way, towards angels and men, ; in which sense, our Lord affirmeth none to be good, save one, to wit, God, *Matth. xix. 17.* Or 2dly, We may consider it, as importing an infinite fulness of glorious perfections in the deity, whereby he is not only infinitely blessed in and from himself, but capable to render angels and men perfectly blessed also. Upon which account, the prophet *Zech. chap. ix. 17.* cries out with admiration (with the same word that is here used)—*How great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty ?* Or 3dly. We may consider it, as it denoteth an infinite love and good will in the deity, towards communicating of this his infinite

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fulness, to elect angels and men, to the utmost capacity of their natures ; expressed by his being abundant in goodness and truth, *Exod. xxxiv. 6.* And by his being good and doing good, *Psal. 119. 68.*

By all which we may clearly see, a twofold goodness in the deity : First, a moral goodness, consisting in the infinite moral perfections of holiness, justice and righteousness in the divine nature: the displays of which, are what render him exceeding glorious, in the sight of angels and men, as *Isaiah* testifieth, in that extraordinary vision, of the divine majesty and glory in the temple, *chap. vi. 1, 2, 3, verses.* And 2dly. There is a sovereign communicative goodness, consisting in the expressions of his infinite fulness, all-sufficiency and love, towards his chosen, amongst angels and men ; which intirely dependeth upon the sovereign pleasure of the divine will ; which goodness is also so great, that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive all the purposes and performances thereof, *1 Cor. ii. 9.* And thus abstract from the manifold goodness of common providence, towards all the children of men, without distinction ; we have some view, of that glorious perfection of goodness in the deity.

In sum, God is good, as he is the alone being, infinite in holiness and blessedness, and next as being the fountain of both to angels and men. Which two must be owned to be the clearest, highest and most glorious notions and discoveries of the deity, which angels or men are possibly capable of ; all the other perfections of being, wisdom, power and truth ; being principally glorious, to the intelligent rational mind only, in so far as they are set on work, and influenced by holiness, and in the progress and issue of their operations demonstrate

an infinite fulness, and love, towards the compleating a perfect blessedness in angels and men. From all which, it cannot but be evident, that the divine goodness, in its foresaid complex import, must be the perfection, in which the glory of the deity, is most concerned; and therefore there can remain no further doubt, but that the divine sovereignty, in its eternal disposal and distribution of angels and men, infallibly kept a special eye, upon the advancement of its glory, in the whole of its import. Upon all which,

The native inquiry, that next falls in, must certainly be; How shall the glory of this great comprehensive perfection of the divine goodness, in both its parts, moral and communicative, be most highly raised, through time and eternity?

To clear which, it would be considered, that the moral branch, importing the infinite holiness and righteousness of God, being the attribute, which of all others, is most expressive of the very nature and essential excellency and perfection of the deity; while the other, to wit, the communicative respecteth more the gracious and generous emanations of the divine fulness, depending upon the freedom of the divine will; It must therefore be reasonably allowed, that a special and principal regard should be had to the glory of the former; yea, that the glorifying of the latter be done in subserviency unto the glory of the former: for considering that all emanations ought to consult the glory of the nature and fountain, of which they are only streams; and that no act must darken but advance the glory of its principle: certainly, the essential necessary perfections of the divine nature must therefore regulate the freedom of the divine will, in all its determinations.

In short, God, must be proclaimed (once) to be love, 1 *John* iv. 8 but thrice to be holy, *Isai.*

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vi. 3. Holy, holy, holy. And if at any time the greatness and wonderfulness of the divine love to mankind be set out by manifold expressions, *Exod. xxxiv. 6 7 the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth: keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin: behold, all these must be instantly qualified, by the remarkable addition for the glory of holiness—And that will by no means clear the guilty.* Let us therefore seriously ponder this most remarkable qualification subjoined, in the close of these verses. And many of our doubts, in relation to the doctrine of the eternal divine predestination shall come to be considerably cleared: But our carnal fond selfish thoughts (*Psal. l. 21.*) of a deity absolutely love and mercy, without any solid remembrance of essential infinite holiness and righteousness, spoils and confounds all.

And thus having now heard the nature and great import, both of the moral, and communicative goodness of the deity; the true state of the question, falling in next, under the divine consideration, must certainly be; *First*, which way shall the glory of the divine holiness, and *2thly*, of the divine love, in consistency with the glory of the former, be most highly and conspicuously raised and exalted through time and eternity, in the sovereign disposal of angels and men? With respect to which,

Towards clearing the first branch or member of the question; It would be considered, That justice the native fruit, and necessary product of the divine holiness and righteousness, is that perfection in the deity, which not only implyeth holiness, as its foundation and spring, clearly demonstrating an essential love to all moral good, and the hatred of all moral evil; and so in its execution, argueth
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the greatest of perfection in the divine nature (God being principally glorious in holiness, *Exod. xv. 11.*) but also openeth a door for glorifying a great many other divine perfections, as 1. The divine majesty and greatness, as being the supreme judge, able to call all, to an account. And 2^{dly}, the divine impartiality and uprightness, as being one, with whom there is no respect of persons: And 3^{dly}, The divine omniscience, as being able to bring every work to light: so also the divine jealousy, as resenting what toucheth his glory: And finally making way for the glory of the divine power, in its terrible vindictive effects, upon rebellious angels and men, justly proclaiming that there is no party for the deity, to be found in heaven or in earth.

All which being duly considered, it must be owned, that justice being thus the attribute so demonstrative of the divine holiness, and of so many other glorious divine perfections; That therefore it might, with as much of reason (not to say more) plead for a deep share of interest in the eternal decrees of predestination, as any of all the divine perfections; yea, mercy itself must give way unto it, allowing first its full and compleat satisfaction, (as being essential unto the divine nature) before ever one note of praise be offered to be sung unto mercy. Christ by suffering must first declare the divine holiness, righteousness and justice; and then God may proceed, to the praise of mercy, to justify, even the ungodly, *Rom. iii. 25. Whom God hath set forth, to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.*

In sum, to render to angels and men, according to their works, is an act so comprehensive of the greatest perfection, that there is none can be more

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worthy of the deity : yea it is more worthy of him, than his continuing eternal life with the holy angels, or promising eternal life to perfect obedience in man. For whereas by these he only declareth a positive holiness and righteousness in the divine nature : Behold by the eternal condign punishment of rebellious angels and men, he proclaimeth himself necessarily holy : and that he is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, *Hab* i. 13. even, that he cannot but hate and punish sin : Briefly, by this procedure of justice, against sinning impenitent angels and men, on the one hand, and by justice's exact procedure against Christ, as the elect's surety, on the other ; the deity shall be eternally adored and praised, as the *thrice holy God*, and the *rock, whose work is perfect, and whose ways are judgment : A God of truth, and without iniquity ; just and right is he*, *Isai*. vi. 3. *Deut*. xxxii. 4.

But to set this matter yet in greater light, and to shew the depth of wisdom that is in the eternal decree of predestination so far as design'd for the glory of justice ; let reason consider (as hath been cleared already) that as justice, is the attribute most demonstrative of the essential holiness and righteousness of the deity, so essential infinite holiness, is the glory of all the divine perfections ; for moral perfections being the most excellent of all others ; and holiness being the glory of all moral perfections (all others being only glorious in so far as tinged or qualified with it) then, certainly an essential infiniteness therein, must be the highest notion of all possible perfection. Accordingly, we have one dark instance of the truth of this, In the fallen angels, whose choice natural excellencies of spirituality, immortality, great knowledge, wisdom and power, are become in their exercise (since they lost their holiness) the
grossest

grossest of imperfections, and in their issue eternally fatal. Considering then, how much the most glorious perfection in the deity, dependeth upon the manifestation of his justice, upon rebellious angels and men ; let reason no more term the divine predestination, in any branch thereof, an unaccountable doctrine ; or any ways think it strange,

That, an essentially infinitely holy and wise God, did from all eternity decree to manifest his glorious justice and power, upon a certain number of angels and men, for their wilful rebellion and sin against him after he had created them perfectly holy and happy ; *Rom. ix. 21, 22.* Which yet is the grand quarrel, with thousands at this day, against the book of God, and revealed religion ; as quite forgetting, that the foresaid eternal decree, was so far absolutely a secret in the divine breast, that God could appeal to the consciences of all the fallen angels and men ; if ever the foresaid decree, was so much as once in their view, or if it did so much as occasion one thought towards their apostacy. Yea more, considering how ready *Adam* was upon his fall, tacitely to blame God for the same ; as is evident by his reply : *The woman which (Thou) gavest me did give me and I did eat Gen. iii. 12.* Certainly we have all the reason in the world to believe, that had God, either by any sensible desertion of him, previous to his sin and fall, or by the least intimation, or impression of the decreed permission thereof, any ways encouraged or advanced the same ; man had not been long of returning the same back again upon God, charging him accordingly : And therefore, let none pretending to solid reason, offer in this matter, to charge God foolishly.

Briefly, neither angels nor man, could be made the independent immutable God, and therefore

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in their natures as creatures, they must be mutab'le and fallible. The divine goodness made angels and men perfectly holy and happy; if they wilfully sin, and despise this his goodness, had not the deity power, to decree the permission of the same, to the glory of his justice and mercy? or shall an infinitely wise agent create in vain, or reduce his creature to its first nothing. In fine, man knows not, what a great and glorious being, a sovereign infinite God is, nor suitably remembreth creature and sinful distance: And hence the proud earthworm, opens its mouth against heaven: *darkning counsel by words, without knowledge*, Job. xxxviii. 2.

If any should here object, that had all men been given by the father, to Christ, and he have satisfied for them, then justice and with it the divine holiness, might have been fully as much glorified. In answer to this, such would first consider where then should sovereignty have appeared? Which necessarily requireth, *I will have mercy, and I will not*, as I please. *2dly*. Had all been put on the same level, and no distinguishing choice; It would have given too great an umbrage of something in the creature, to have been the moving cause of the divine decree, rather than the absolute pleasure of the divine will. *3dly*. What should have become of the song of the redeemed about the throne through eternity? which is principally to be founded upon free distinguishing love, and grace towards God's chosen. Unto him that loved (us) and redeemed us to God by his blood (out of) every kindred, tongue, and people and nation. *Rev* i. 9. Briefly, reason itself must own, that the glory of the deity (who made all) justly pleadeth for consideration and regard above all the whole interests of the creature. It is true, the divine goodness, hath prevented a competition, betwixt the glory of the deity, and the good and happiness of the whole creation;

creation : But upon supposition of such competition, reason must own, that suppose it should be at the expence of the whole creation, the divine glory of the great creator. ought to be consulted. In fine, — *Neither will I give my glory to any other, (Isa xli. 8)* is not only a most reasonable and just, but also an essential claim of the deity. Accordingly, were old *Noah* alive he could attest, his eyes saw a whole world give way unto the same.

The conclusion of all which, is ; Be silent then O earth-worm, it is in vain for thee to quarrel with this great sovereign. He is God, and will be God, if proud, carnal reason in thy heart, should dethrone him a thousand times, in a day. Mind therefore, *Elihu* his words to *Job*, *God is greater than man ; why dost thou strive against him ; for he giveth no account of any of his matters ; chap xxxiii. 12, 13* canst not therefore thyself any more against this rock. Only be wise, and learn to fear his sovereignty aright in time, and thou shalt never have cause to fear it through eternity, For,

Who knoweth, but it hath spoke for thee, at the writing of the *Lamb's Book of Life ? Rev. xxi. 27.* and if thou want to be assured of it, only do these three : First, Ingenuously and humbly confess creature distance that thou art dust and ashes, *Gen. xviii. 27.* dependent dust, owing thy all to God, and capable of deserving nothing at his hand, 2dly. Mourn seriously because of sinful distance, loathing thyself, because of the contrariety in thy nature, frame and walk, unto the holy nature and law of God. And then 3dly. Cordially esteem and embrace the mercy promised and offered, *Luke i 72.* say from thy soul, in deep humility unto the Lord Jesus Christ : *I have destroyed myself, but my help is in thee, Hos. xiii.*

9 and Lord be merciful to me a sinner, Luke xviii. 13. and then practically, by a course of new obedience, evidence and prove the sincerity of thy sorrow for thy sin, and of thy love to the Lord Jesus Christ : and upon these, any person may boldly venture eternity with thee, notwithstanding of divine sovereignty : as being fully assured of the truth of that great, remarkable and soul refreshing promise, pleasantly qualifying the awful dread, and terror of the high majesty, and sovereignty of the deity, *Isai. lxi. 1, 2, Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool ; Where is the house, that ye build unto Me : and where is the place of my rest ? For all those things, hath my hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord : But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.*

And thus having now heard, how the glory of justice, as being most demonstrative of the moral perfections of the deity ; hath thereupon been greatly consulted by sovereignty, in the eternal disposal of angels and men, as will be far more cleared, when the sin and fall of both comes to be spoken of : Let us next proceed to view the great regard sovereignty also shewed in the foresaid disposal, unto the glory, of the other branch of the divine goodness, to wit, the divine love as the spring of the communicative goodness, which is so great, that it passeth all understanding. *Eph. iii 19.*

The essential infinite holiness and righteousness of God, manifested by justice, and the actings thereof upon sinning angels and men, and upon the Lord Jesus Christ, as the elect's surety, doth indeed proclaim the deity, to be the most excellent and perfect being in himself ; and consequently the most glorious unto intelligent angels and men, endued with moral knowledge : But to compleat

pleat declarative glory, there is another discovery of the deity yet wanting, and that is, to manifest himself as infinitely the most amiable and desireable object of all others, unto rational creatures, capable of distinguishing, and making choice of portions, which discovery doth indeed compleat declarative glory : And hence we find the spouse concluding note, in Christ's commendation is,—That, *He is altogether lovely, or all desires*, Song. v. 16.

Briefly, these two manifestations, to wit, of God's being, 1. The most excellent being in himself and thereupon the most glorious unto angels and men ; and 2dly, The most amiable object or portion for choice ; being the very highest thoughts, and most perfect notions of the deity, which intelligent rational beings are capable of, in time or eternity, it must necessarily be thereupon supposed, that an infinitely wise God, would principally consult their glory, in fixing the eternal divine decrees, relative to angels and men. Accordingly we find the Apostle most explicit and full upon this head (*Rom. ix. 22. 23*) in his treating of the grand final design of divine predestination.

In order then to God's making this other discovery of himself. There must appear in the deity an all-sufficient communicative love, most freely bestowing of his treasures upon some angels, and men, till he bring them as near the divine perfection and blessings, as the finite powers and capacities of their nature will allow : This I say, being the next perfection unto the divine holiness, rendering the glorious God perfectly amiable, its glory must therefore be also considered by sovereignty, in that great founding decree.

Two great questions, then may be now supposed to be under the consideration of the divine wisdom and sovereignty ; As, *First*, How divine love, in
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a sovereign way, may be made most conspicuous and glorious with respect unto angels : And then 2dly, with respect unto men ?

As to the holy angels, It is found, that, lest the divine love should be suspected to be much owing unto either 1. The high original perfection of their nature, as an inviting lovely object, engaging the divine affection : Or 2dly. Unto their perseverance in obedience as meritoriously deserving the same, or at least as obliging its continuance towards them ; therefore to obviate all these, and to render the display of divine love absolutely free and exceeding glorious ; These two rules were found necessary and proper to be observed in this matter : *First* That great numbers of them, even legions (*Mark v. 9*) should be permitted to sin and fall ; and that to evince, 1. The great perfection of the angelical nature, in the elect among them, to have no ways been the foreseen meritorious or moving cause, of the eternal distinguishing decree. But that it was merely sovereignty and free love, that had loved *Michael*, while *Belzebut*, once equally holy and perfect was rejected 2dly, To evince, that the perseverance of the elect angels in their obedience, was entirely owing unto an extrinſick distinguishing decree, and confirming grace thereupon, and no ways unto their original inherent perfection ; while their compleat equals sinning in heaven, at once lost their holiness and glory. Accordingly, we find, the scripture most plain, upon these heads, 1 *Tim v. 21. I charge thee, before God and the elect angels.* Jude vi *And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.*

Again secondly ; to exalt love towards the elect angels ; It is found further proper, that they should

shou'd be for ever preserved and continued in their original holiness and blessedness, absolutely and eternally free from all sin and misery ; yea. and that even, while the elect amongst mankind are permitted to fall, and plunge themselves deeply into both ; and that, though at the same time, they were the objects of the same special divine distinguishing love, along with the elect angels.

And if it be enquired, how this piece of the divine ordination, in relation to the confirmation of the elect angels, tended to display and advance the glory of the divine love, towards them ? Let us only consider, a few things, and it shall become very evident. As 1. That when the elect angels reflect and ponder how, *First*, they are the glorious creator's first born, in respect of man : And *2dly*. How near they are advanced to the deity, in respect of the spirituality of their nature, perfect holiness, vast knowledge, and great power, exalting them highly above man, who tabernacleth in clay, and whose spiritual powers are much limited and clogged thereby, till once the natural body, make the blessed exchange with the spiritual, 1. *Cor. xv. 44.*

Again *3dly*. When they consider how, when man was permitted to fall, they were preserved and confirmed by sovereign almighty grace ; And *4thly*. How from the beginning, they have had their habitation on high, surrounding the throne, beholding the face of God, and enjoying a perfect sense of the divine love, these five thousand years and upwards ; And that, all this, while poor fallen man is left on the foot-stool, travelling through an howling and weary wilderness full of enemies, *Red Seas* and *Jordans* ; before they can get into the promised land : And withal *5thly*, When they consider, how they are at the day of judgment to enter and possess heaven along with the redeemed
through

through eternity, as if they never had enjoyed it before, and are to continue there for ever with the Lord (*Zech. iii. 7.*) And that, as certainly and infallibly, as if the Lord Jesus Christ, had as really assumed their nature as what he did ours: I say; considering all these things complexly, it is clear, the elect angels will have exceeding great ground to exalt and praise through eternity, sovereign, distinguishing and wonderful love, in the divine procedure towards them. And accordingly, as a confirmation of the truth of this, we find a most glorious song of praise in their mouths, along with the redeemed, *Rev. v. 11, 12.* *And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels, round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them, was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands: Saying with a loud voice, worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory and blessing.*

But now above all, as being most nearly concerned in it, and as being the most noble, solid, and sweetest subject, the rational human mind is capable of conversing with, in time or eternity, let us next, with the most serious thought, survey the procedure of the divine love towards man.

Here, it is true, that at first view, it might be supposed, That man being a meaner and lower object than the angels, *Psal. viii. 5.* whose natures and perfections are far above ours; That thereupon, the divine love would take but very little notice of him; but behold, God, whose thoughts and ways, are not like unto ours, rather finds, that the less promising the object be, in itself, it is so much the more fit for infinite wisdom to glorify itself upon, and that the more mean and unworthy the object be; that it is the more adjusted to infinite love to manifest it self gloriously upon: Accordingly,

cordingly, for making the said display of the divine love towards man, exceeding glorious, the following wonderful procedure is observed.

First, A certain great number of mankind, consisting of some out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation, *Rev. v. 9.* and containing multitudes, which no man can number, *Rev. vii. 9.* Are by sovereign and free love elected by God from all eternity, unto everlasting life and glory. *Matth. xxv. 34.* *Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world.* Upon which, let us now here in the entry observe, that by this first step, man, (in point of eternal electing love) is set upon the same level, with the elect angels: And thereupon let us next, with the most serious thought, and affectionate remembrance accurately behold the ensuing astonishing steps of divine sovereignty, wisdom and love, towards mankind, above any thing done for the angels; as shall be discoursed at considerable length in the two following chapters. Only before I leave the general doctrine of predestination, I shall discourse and remove the grand prejudice and objection against one of the branches thereof, to wit, the decree of divine reprobation, in relation, to all the remaining part of mankind who were not elected.

I know the great noise made against the said decree, is, that its being once establish'd from eternity, and being immutable, that certainly it necessarily inferred man's fall, sin and damnation violently urging him (as it were) unto the same. And thus the old objection—*Who hath resisted his will, Rom. ix. 19.* is still, insisted upon, till this day.

For clearing which; let us consider *First*, That reason it self, must own, that there is a great difference

ference between the certainty of the event, of an eternal divine decree, and any sinful influence, coming from the said decree towards the accomplishment of that event. For, as on the one hand it is the glory of the deity, (proclaiming the infallibility and immutability of the divine mind and will) that all his decrees should certainly come to pass : So on the other hand, it is impossible to shew the least of iniquous or blameable, influence, arising from the decree of reprobation, towards the bringing about man's fall, sin or damnation. In order to the clearing of which, let us but trace the whole progress of man's fall, in all the steps thereof, and we shall be more and more convinced of the most absolute and perfect innocence, upon the part of the eternal divine decree, in this matter :

For,

First, The eternal decree, being an absolute secret in the divine breast, it could not possibly give the least encouragement, yea nor insinuation to satan to tempt man to sin. *2dly* Perfect man, as coming out of the glorious creator's hands, was a sufficient party for satan's temptation, had he improved the perfection of grace and strength with which he was endowed : And hence, accordingly, we find the woman fairly repulsing the old serpent upon his first attack by improving her knowledge of the deity's legislative power, together with her respect unto the same, *Gen. iii. 3.* So that no fallen angel, could ever have forced perfect man, by any external proposal of this kind, had the internal perfect light and power of the human mind and will, been but suitably and fully improved against it : From all which it is most evident, that though an omniscient and holy God, from all eternity, decreed to leave some of mankind, in their sin and misery ; that yet this eternal decree no manner of way impeded God's creating man most perfect

perfect and upright : So that it was neither God, nor any previous divine decree, but man alone, voluntarily hearkning unto satan, that had any sinful hand in the matter of the fall.

Again, *3dly*, The eternal decree being absolutely unknown by Adam and Eve, it was simply impossible, that the same could any manner of way, either darken the mind, or deceive the practical understanding, or ensnare the will or affections, or any ways mislead the ear, eye or hand of our first parents, in that first and grand transgression : And therefore, that we may plainly and briefly see this doctrine, against which there is so much noise in the world in our day :

Let us in short consider, that the sum of all consisteth in these two, *First*, Man, as the moral head of all his posterity, being endued with a sufficiency of grace if (improved) towards perfect obedience ; he, notwithstanding sinned wilfully, yea and that in the very face of promised life, and threatened death, as he knew from the tenor of the first covenant, *Gen. ii. 17.* *2dly*. Upon this an omniscient and holy God (whose glory it is to overrule all events in time by his eternal previous decrees) is found for the glory of his sovereignty to have made a difference amongst fallen mankind : as having chosen some unto everlasting life through Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of his mercy ; And as having passed by and rejected others, leaving them in their sin and misery, to the praise of his glorious justice.

Again *3dly*, Man being thus wilfully fallen into sin, those of his posterity, rejected of God, wilfully continue to live in their sins, seperadding (according to their years) thousands of known actual transgressions : And withal, wilfully despising any means towards their recovery ; They at last die, impenitently in their rebellion : All which

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being

III *The decrees of the divine predestination*

being considered, who can reclaim against a holy and just God, for proceeding to actual condemnation. Upon all which,

Considering that this is the true spiritual account and substance of the doctrine of divine predestination; what rational person, allowing a few serious thoughts upon the same, and thereupon speaking impartially, can possibly affix any blot upon the divine procedure therein? Briefly, where can reason's quarrel against this doctrine be solidly founded? It is because man, was not made a second God, infalliable and unchangeable: Or will solid reason say, That God stood obliged to make man absolutely unchangeable and infallible, while even the angelical nature itself, was not made such? Or rather must not reason own, that it was most suitable to the wisdom and glory of the deity, that no created nature in heaven or in earth, should vie or compare itself with the unchangeable God? Or can its quarrel possibly be, that some of the angels were confirmed, whereas the whole of mankind were permitted to fall? surely, if this be the objection; reason will be ashamed to insist upon it, when it remembers, that the angels God and King, is become our dying saviour, and our elder brother, Or

Again, is it reason's controversy, that God did not recover all? Pray! by what obligation can reason plead for this: Shall not God have power to dispose of his own grace and glory, as he pleaseth? And is not rather a wonder, that a holy, just and righteous God pardoned and saved so much as one of rebellious mankind, than that he passed by some? Or again is it possible, that the ground of the quarrel is, That God from all eternity fixed his decrees of election and reprobation? Surely this can never be the arguing of solid reason; for, shall not an omniscient God, and an infinite divine mind,

mind, be allowed to foreknow, and provide for all events in time ; but more especially for such a remarkable and important one, as what the treason and rebellion of man, the Lord of the lower world, was, that so against it should fall out in time, it might be over-ruled by the eternal preivious decrees, to the glory of such great perfection in the deity, as what justice and mercy are.

CHAPTER VI.

Its found proper, for the glory of the divine wisdom, that a very different method, should be observed in the divine love's communicating itself to elect Men, from that in which it was expressed towards the elect angels. Yea more, infinite wisdom finds it proper towards the high exaltation of the divine sovereignty and love, that the displays of the divine good-will, towards elect men, should be yet greater and more glorious, than what it was with respect to the elect angels. This greater and more glorious display, declareth by a remarkable gradation of the several steps of the sovereign divine love towards elect men : evidenced 1. In the explicite, great, joint and affectionate concern of all the persons of the adoreable TRINITY, both at man's creation, and redemption : There having been an inconceivable, affectionate, mutual giving and receiving of man. among all the persons of the glorious God-Head. 2dly. By solemn transactions and oaths, Issuing in an everlasting covenant of peace, betwixt Jehovah and the Mediator. 3dly, By electing love continuing not only towards perfect (as in the case of the elect holy angels.) but even towards fallen and sinful man. 4thly, By the divine love's being at the greatest charge imaginable in man's

redemption ; while a creating and preserving act of the divine power, was the sum of all the deity's operations, towards the elect angels. In all which four steps, man hath greatly the advantage over them.

TH E next great question, falling now under the view of the divine wisdom, in its procedure in relation to man, must be ; Whether shall the divine love take a different method, or keep by the same, in communicating itself unto elect men ; from that observed by it, in relation to the elect angels ? For the determination of which, let us first consider some more general steps, that were found necessary for the glory of the deity, as the glorious creator, and sovereign disposer of angels and men : And then *2dly*, Some more special steps, requisite for accomplishing the same end, with respect unto men.

Towards clearing the former, let us consider the first general step found proper for the glory of the divine holiness and goodness, was, that both angels and man as coming out of the hand of their creator, should be found perfect in holiness and happiness ; and accordingly we know, matters were so ordered, upon their first creation. *2dly*. It was also found necessary for the glory of the divine *self-sufficiency, independency and immutability*, that both angels and man should be created *fallible and mutable* ; and that not only as absolutely considered in themselves ; In which sense, the most glorious creature (being dependent) must certainly be, but also as being left so far without an establishing and confirming decree, as some of both should be permitted actually to fall ; which accordingly in time, came to pass : But withal, on the other hand. *3dly*, Lest this fall of both, should give the least umbrage of the want of sufficient confirming

confirming grace in the deity for preserving and establishing original holiness and blessedness ; therefore it is found also most proper, that the all-sufficient divine power, shou'd preserve the elect angels ; in their original perfections and glory, while all the rest, by their fall should evidently proclaim, that there is no self-sufficient, independent being save God alone ; and that no creature, even the most perfect can stand, but by him.

Accordingly, it is manifest, The elect angels were preserved and confirmed : And hence they are termed the holy angels, *Matth. xxv. 31.* In all which, the divine wisdom shined most conspicuously : In so far as, first, had all the angels sinned, considering all mankind fell, then where among all the rational creation, should the deity have had the least resemblance left him, of the glorious perfection of the divine holiness ; as an object proper for entertaining the divine complacency ? Again *2dly*, Where also should have been the perfect love, glorious worship, and Hallelujahs about the throne, while man on earth was rebellious below ? And *3dly*, Where should there have been, ministering spirits, unto the militant heirs to salvation, during their wilderness condition. Briefly, the divine wisdom, could not allow, that both worlds higher and lower, should be made and preserved for rebels.

But to proceed *4thly*, It was found, that nothing possibly could exalt and proclaim the divine sovereignty and love, more, than for God, notwithstanding of the superior original holiness, and other glorious natural perfections, to be found in the angelical nature, above the human ; yet for him to express as great, and in manifold respects a greater love and regard to man (that is of the earth) than unto them : because hereby, in earnest, sovereignty, in its glory was elevated to the highest

egree, proclaiming as it were, from of the throne, with a loud voice, in the hearing of the most glorious angels and arch-angels, *Be still, and know that I am God*, who will do in heaven and in earth, among angels and men, as pleaseth Me. Accordingly, behold it was resolved, the Son of God should not take on him the nature of angels, but the seed of *Abraham*, *Heb. ii. 16*. Which procedure (as we shall just now hear) paved the way for a most glorious display of the divine love towards mankind. And therefore reader, in the name of this distinguishing love, I cannot but intreat thee to stop, and ponder, how much man owes to divine sovereignty, in giving him the pre-eminence, even above the glorious angels : Whoever then attack and reclaim against this high attribute, surely, it becometh not man so to do : If the fallen angels will : yet let fallen man be silent, only let him out of the dust praise and admire such incomprehensible distinguishing love, and grace.

If any should here object, that this peculiar regard to mankind, inverting the order of creation, in passing by the angels ; The first-born, and who originally were the more noble branches of the family ; seems to afford some ground for temptation and envy, not only to the fallen, but even to the holy angels themselves ; and so not to be so congruous to the conduct of divine wisdom. It is answered ; It ought to be remembered, that 1. Seeing the glory of the divine sovereignty required it ; then nothing, with the creature must be put in the ballance. 2dly, The freeness and greatness of love, taking its rise, much from the meanness and worthlessness of the object beloved ; the choice of mean man rather than of those high and noble spirits, became well the divine wisdom ; especially seeing the design on foot, was to demonstrate

monstrate the freedom and heighth of the divine love. Again 3dly, the angels sinning, in face of the most elevated perfection, blessedness and honour, they being chief of the creation of God; and sinning before the very throne of holiness and majesty itself, and contriving the highest treason, in the very presence of the king; And withal committing all this, absolutely in and from themselves, without any extrinsecal tempter or old serpent, to deceive them, and without any beautiful forbidden fruit, pleasant to the eye, or any insinuating concurrence of an intimate *Eve*: Their sin undoubtedly more than man's (though also exceeding great) did call aloud by reason of these heinous aggravations, upon the divine justice, power, and jealousy, deeply to resent and avenge the same, 2 *Pet.* ii. 4 *Jude* 6.

And then as to the last branch of the objection, to wit, The giving some umbrage for envy or jealousy to the holy angels, by the singular and peculiar expressions of the divine love in Christ unto mankind: It would be remembered, that the elect holy angels seeing clearly, that the glory of the deity, in his sovereignty and love, is thereby more advanced, than by any other method; And again they remembering, the great things done for them by this God, as their glorious and munificent creator; He having exalted them so highly above all others, making them his glorious court, his ministers of state, his intimate favourites, standing always in his presence, *Luke.* xv. 7, 10 But above all, they remembering, how they themselves stand, entirely by sovereignty, it being sovereign and free love that first distinguished and elected them, and next preserved and confirmed them, while their fellows in original grace and glory sinned and sunk into the lowest hell: I say these things being seen and remembered by the elect angels, and with-

al they being perfectly holy, and desirous above all things of the glory of their God; behold instead of reclaiming against the extraordinary procedure of the divine love towards mankind, in the making of Christ our *Immanuel* or God with us; while not so with them; they are found the very first proclaimers and melodious praisers, at our Lords incarnation, *Luke ii 13, 14*. Briefly, the first great note they sang being (*Glory to God in the highest*) could not fail of making way with them, for all the other, which were to follow; though not so immediately interested in the same.

Accordingly, the songs of the angels, together with their affectionate joyful deportment, at our Lord's birth, is most remarkable; for *First*, Some special one of their number intimateth the great news unto the shepherds; *2dly*, This he doth without any loss of time, on the very day of our Lord's birth, while yet lying in his swaddling clothes in the manger, *ver. 12*. *3dly*, Intimateth it with the greatest complacency — *Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy*, which shall be to all people, *ver. 10*. *4thly*, Upon the intimation of the news, instantly there are found a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying *ver. 13. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men, ver. 14*.

With respect to all which, it is remarkable, that their first note is, *Glory to God in the highest*; clearly intimating, their seeing the mystery of the incarnation, to be a grand mean and project, for the exalting highly the glory of God; and thereupon they go on singing sweetly the remaining notes. In fine, upon the whole it is evident, from the tenor of scripture accounts, concerning the angels, that they are perfectly satisfied, that even we poor clay should along with them, have their God to be our God, and our redeemer and elder brother

brother to be their king, and to be worshipped by them, *Heb. i. 6.* And that they themselves from love to him, are perfectly pleased to become *ministering spirits* (*Heb. i. 14*) unto the heirs of salvation; and at the long run joyfully to convey us in unto the palace of the king, *Matth. xxv. 31.* Upon all which, who possibly can desire greater evidences of full satisfaction with the distinguishing divine love, towards the children of men, in the incarnation of the Son of God, than what the elect holy angels have given?

The premisses being considered, the principal conclusion, in which we are concerned and which preserveth the thread of the present discourse unbroken, is this,

That the divine wisdom found, that in order to the exalting highly the glory of the divine sovereignty and love, it was necessary, that the display of the divine love towards men should be yet greater, and more glorious, than what it was with respect to the angels; and that for that end a different method, containing some singular extraordinary evidences of love in the deity, towards man, must be fallen upon: accordingly we find, *God so loving the elect world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Joh. iii. 16.* Which mystery hath so much of astonishing wisdom and love in it, as setteth the angels on musing, *1 Pet. i. 12.* Which things the angels desire to look into. All which being clear, let us survey the divine procedure a little further; in order to which, let us consider,

As manifold and great projects and operations do well become an infinite agent, so infinite wisdom must still advance and make progress in the gloriousness of its performances. Accordingly, so it was here; for with respect to the elect angels; behold,

behold, great creating, electing and confirming love towards them. But with respect unto elect men: let us behold and admire condescending, self-denying, bleeding, yea, dying love, towards them. The elect angels may indeed, upon just ground, begin the song of the redeemed, *Rev. i. 5. Unto him that loved us*: But they must stop there, while the redeemed of the Lord shall have ground to proceed, to the wonderful sweet remaining notes,—*And washed us from our sins in his own blood.*

And may I not here make bold to say, that when the redeemed of the Lord, shall come to that note in the song, *in his own blood*; and, at the same time, shall have access to look upon the glorious redeemer, beholding the dignity and glory of the person who died; reflecting also upon their own unworthiness, and withal remembering, that there was not one drop of that precious blood shed for any of the *fallen angels*, yea not for the most *glorious arch angel*, about the throne; that certainly thereupon these two high notes, *Salvation to our God*———*And unto the lamb*, *Rev. vii. 10.* Shall be sung with such elevation and perfection of love, mixed with such high admiration of sovereignty and grace to the divine choice; as touching and affecting the redeemed so nearly and sensibly; that even the melodious angels (if I may so speak) shall be in a great measure over-sung for a time. Accordingly, we find *Rev. vii. 9. 10.* That the angels about the throne, and about the elders are silent, till this song is ended, and then *verses 11. and 12.* as having long pryed (1 *Pet. i. 12.*) into that great mystery, and as being fully perswaded of the gloriousness thereof, and of its great and wonderful effects upon the church; they afterwards, from zeal to the glory of God, and from admiration of the person of the redeemer, fall

fall in (though not so immediately interested) joyn-
ing in their hearty Amen ; and saying, *Blessing
and glory and wisdom, and thanksgiving and honor,
and power and might, be unto our God, for ever and
ever, verse 12.*

But not to rest in this general view of the greatness
of the divine love towards man, let us more particu-
larly trace the special extraordinary expression there-
of peculiar to the elect among mankind, quite above
and beyond any thing done by it, for the angels.
And to make all more distinct, I shall chuse to deliver
it, by way of *climax* or gradation, consisting of so many
steps, in all which the divine love, displayeth it-
self wonderously towards sinful dust and ashes.
And not being now to insist upon election, where-
by men were put upon a level with the elect angels,
I proceed to declare the several degrees, by which
the divine love, ascendeth higher and higher, till it
come to be a love, that passeth knowledge, *Eph. iii. 19.*

The first remarkable step in this glorious climax,
deserving our consideration, is, *the great and joint
affectionate concern*, which the whole adoreable
Trinity in all the three persons expressed towards
man ; and that without evidencing any such deep
concern towards the angels : So that man is never
sooner spoke of, either as to his creation or redemp-
tion, but presently all the great Three do appear,
and join hand to the work. Accordingly, we find,
Gen. i. 26. The glorious Trinity, stepping forth
and saying, *Let us make man after our image.*
And again at *Jordan*, upon our Lord's publick en-
try unto his mediatory work ; behold a voice
cometh from the father ; and the Holy Ghost de-
scendeth, *Matth iii. 16. 17.* Whereas, as to the
angels the scripture mentioneth indeed once, that
they are elect, *1 Tim. v. 21.* But as for the holy
Trinity's displaying either their order of substance
or operation at their creation or election, or expres-
sing

sing any such concern in them, we find nothing recorded ; so far as I remember.

Having now heard, of this wonderful divine joint concern ; let us more particularly consider its workings ; as First, *The Father* from the greatest love, not only simply electeth man, but from love, giveth them to the Son ; towards securing their happiness infallibly unto them, *John xvii. 9.* intimating clearly, that these persons were most precious in his sight, dearly beloved by him, and therefore they are recommended to the special redeeming care of the Son. *2dly, The Son* joyfully receiveth, delighting in the gift, even under the fore-knowledge of the costly and bloody price of their redemption, *Pro. viii. 31.* *3dly, They* are recommended and given by both over unto the Holy Ghost, towards their perfect sanctification, *John 14. 16, 17.* Upon all which who can but cry out, what manner of love is this ? for, behold man, is spoke of and treated by the deity, as if he were a gift fit to enrich and go round amongst the ever blessed Trinity ; or as if it were a satisfying portion unto them all, *Deut. xxxii. 9.* Again, being once given by the Father to the Son, behold, the Son's heart is no more above, but while his eye is contemplating the holy angels about the throne, his delights are with the sons of men, below, rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth. Briefly, the elect angels are left, upon the care of the divine power, whereas man is especially recommended to the only begotten and well beloved Son ; the former to the protection of a divine attribute, the latter to the redemption of a divine person. Monstrous soul ! that will not love such a loving God ; concerning himself, so deeply by his Son, and spirit, in the salvation of sinful man.

The second step in this gradation ; and which is no less remarkable than the former, is, That there

was

was not only an affectionate giving and receiving of man, amongst the persons of the adorable Trinity: But there was solemn transactions, issuing in an everlasting and sure covenant, concluded amongst them, *Zech. vi. 13.* The substance of which was, That the Son upon man's fall, must fully satisfy divine justice (as being an essential divine perfection, whose glory must not be lost) for all the sins of the elect: To which the Son, most cheerfully consenting, (*Psal. xl. 6, 7, 8.*) The Father engageth by solemn promise and oath (these two immutable securities, *Heb. vi. 18.*) that in and through his son so satisfying, all given unto him should be blessed, by the spirit's applying unto them (through the conduits of the means of grace) the great salvation, *Isa. liii. 10, 11, 12.* Upon all which, behold now what singular love is in this step also.

The elect angels, did indeed cost the deity, a distinguishing elective decree; but behold man is not only elected, given and received among the divine persons; But there are *mutual divine stipulations, solemn promises and oaths* in the adorable Trinity, and these oaths, conceived in the highest, most sacred and obligatory terms, sometimes swearing by the divine holiness, *Psal. lxxxix. 35.* That glorious perfection, which failing, the deity can no more exist. At other times no less than, I have sworn by *myself*, *Gen. 22. 16, 17.* Pledging the divine being, even with the whole of the divine perfections, for the out-making of the salvation of elect men. *O dust and ashes*, I ask thee, did ever God so swear unto the angels? Or did he ever pledge the divine essence for their glory, or perseverance therein? Be ashamed therefore of thy self, if thou hast not sworn, and devoted back thyself, and thy all to be indeed for the glory of such a condescending and gracious God in Christ.

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The third observable step in this gradation is, That the divine electing love continued not only towards perfect and standing *Adam*, as in the case of the elect holy angels (for so it did towards them) but behold it continued, as to all its great and gracious purposes, even towards fallen and sinful man: Yea, the deity was so pregnant with it, that in the garden his love, (even to engrate and rebellious man) was so great, that like the word burning in *Jeremiah's* breast of old, *Jer. xi. 9.* It behoved quickly to have vent: And therefore, (*Gen. 3. 14.*) before ever God either in the least threatned *Adam* and *Eve*, he first most severely attacketh the *old enemy*, for what he had done to man, curling and degrading the very innocent creature the *serpent*, and all its kind, above all cattle; with a creeping slow motions, and base food all the days of its life; and all for its being a handle, in the grand temptation. The divine love and concern, even in this particular, deserveth our remark: For, man, who by his sin had forfeited all, yet even from regard unto him, one of his fellow creatures naturally most beautiful, and sagacious, and at the time more innocent than himself, yet must be cursed in it self, and all its kind, all the days of its life, for his sake.

But next, what is by far more remarkable, is, That the divine love, as being impatient of the mischief done to man, instantly without delay, proclaimeth war against the old serpent, in the name of the seed of the woman, the mighty lion of the tribe of *Judah*; assuring him at the same time, that his utmost enmity and power should only reach the heel of the seed of the woman: meaning that, he should only wound Christ and his elect slightly: But as for any irrecoverable mortal wound, he should never be able to effectuate the same. Briefly, importing, that the elect's head,
vitals

vitals and noble parts, requisite to spiritual and eternal life, should in all conditions, militant as well as triumphant be altogether above him, *John* x 28, 29. And that the great leading graces of saving faith, sincere love, and filial fear, should still remain even after satan's utmost effects against the weakest of all the redeemed company, *Luke* 22. 32. *Jer.* 32. 40.

Whereas, on the contrary, *The seed of the woman* God-man, should bruise his head; should at his birth banish him his temples, silence him in his oracles; dispossess him of human bodies: terrify him with the unexpected approach of hell (*Mat.* viii. 29.) and defeat his temptation, in the wilderness.

Again should conquer him upon *Mount calvary*, disarming him at once of all his three great weapons, the curse of the law, the strength of sin, and power of death; and should mock him upon *Mount Olivet*, by riding triumph through his principality the air, *Eph.* ii. 2. and drawing him as a slave at his chariot wheels, *Col.* ii. 15. And upon his ascension, should enable a poor tent-maker to spoil his conquests over the *Gentile* world. And moreover declaring that this seed of the woman should in due time destroy antichrist satan's *Vic-Roy*, that man of sin, and dry up *Ephrates* his right hand: And therefore bind himself, with the great chain, for a thousand years, *Rev.* xx. 1, 2.

And lastly importing, that when *Gog* and *Magog*, (his great and last effort) are at the height of their power, and pride, that then by our Lord's second coming, *Michael* and his angels, shall take the dragon, and his angels, and sink them into everlasting torments, *Rev.* xx 8, 9, 10. And all this be done (which is the remarkable point in the present purpose) by the seed of the woman. Briefly,

ly, He is man, who is thus to treat and destroy the prince of the fallen angels, with all his host, *John* iii. 8. While the most glorious arch-angels in heaven, are ministring spirits unto elect men here below. All which being considered, is there not then here a distinguishing and superlative love even to astonishment? Surely, if we shall now ponder, this deep and lasting resentment with the deity of the old serpent's malicious influence upon man's sin and fall; pursuing man's quarrel, even unto the lowest hell against him; We cannot but discover the greatest sympathy and strongest love in the divine breast, towards poor man: yea, and that in a most desperate juncture, when we were lying, cast out in the open field, polluted in our blood, and no eye to pity us, *Ezek.* 16. 6. Behold then it was that God did not only speak for man, but proclaim a most bloody, irreconcilable lasting war for our sakes: The glorious issue of which, shall be the making his poor elect, no less than so many victorious kings unto their God, *Rev.* v. 9, 10.

The *fourth step*, by which sovereign grace greatly ascendeth in this gradation is, that the divine love, in bringing man to glory, must be at a great charge, for compleating his redemption: Whereas the glory of the elect angels, cost the deity (comparatively,) nothing. A creating and preserving act of the divine power was the sum of the divine operations about them. But as to man (he sinning & falling) behold the extraordinary charge! For 1. Offending justice must be satisfied in all its demands: It being the guardian attribute of the divine law, it must both see the curse of the broken law inflicted; and the precepts perfectly fulfilled; and therefore, whoever will redeem man, must find satisfaction to all these. 2dly, Man by sin absolutely corrupted his nature; by the abolition of the

the image of God, and introduction of the image of satan ; there must therefore be much more, than a preserving act of the divine power, as in the case of the elect angels to restore him. He must be created afresh over again, and that by a power, more glorious and almighty than at first : In so far as the passive clay at first had not the least shadow of contrariety in it, unto the divine creating design, whereas, behold in the new and second birth, the greatest enmity and strongest opposition ; *Rom. viii. 7.*

So that the divine love hath 1. Guilty man to ransom at the highest rate, satisfying the highest demands of infinite justice for him ; as if he were an object preferable to all the world ; yea more as if he were an object, without whom the deity could not be happy. Astonishing love ! *What is man, O Lord, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him, Psal. viii. 4.* 2dly, The divine love, hath corrupt man to create a second time, and that not out of the innocent pliable dust ; but must condescend in this second creation to go down to the noisome grave of sin, and fall to work in satan's shop, where the moral stench, is by far greater, than that of *Lazarus* of old : And further must cry with a far more loud and conquering voice, commanding even light to shine out of darkness ; yea, enmity out of love. In fine, he must call life out of death, and heaven out of hell, *Eph. ii. 1.*

Upon the whole, what greater respect could God have put upon man, than thus working miracle upon miracle, in order to his restoration, as if he were a necessary being, or king of the universe, whom the deity could not possibly want. The most glorious angels in heaven, were but once created perfect in holiness and blessedness ; whereas the elect in Adam, have had a double creation. The divine love and power did at first, indeed com-

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mand out of nothing these glorious spirits, the angels, to appear about the throne ; but as to man, the divine love hath brought him first from earth, and then from hell ; performing and multiplying wonders of wisdom, power and mercy, for his sake ; and all to prepare him for heaven ; *Isai.* xxxv. 5, 6, 7. Importunate, indefatigable, unsearchable love !

C H A P T E R VII.

This greater and more glorious display of the divine love towards man, than towards the Elect Angels, is further declared by considering and tracing the fourfold dimension, of this love, insisted upon, by the Apostle, (Eph. iii. 18) even till it issue in a love, which must be acknowledged to surmount all finite understanding. The true import of that fourfold dimension in its height and breadth, depth and length opened up. All great and sincere love, whether divine or human, hath five special ways of venting and expressing itself ; As 1. By way of strong desire, longing for intimate union, and communion with its object. 2dly. By way of noble generosity, in bestowing great gifts upon them. 3dly. In a way of activity and diligence, doing much to obtain them. 4thly. (Which is love's highest elevation) by way of suffering ; undergoing the greatest of severities and trials for their sakes. 5thly. By way of great complacency, resting and rejoicing in the object beloved, as in the all desired by them. Accordingly, all these five are to be found in the divine love, in Christ, towards man ; demonstrating, its greatness and excellent properties : All which being considered, surely
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our Lord Jesus Christ, as God, and as God-Man, being both the fountain and opener of this great depth of the divine love, must justly be the desire of all nations. Monstrous ingratitude, not to love such a loving redeemer.

TH E S E are indeed glorious displays of the divine love towards man; which we have already heard in the preceding chapter. But behold, this love must be yet at a higher elevation; And therefore as the fifth step in this gradation. Let us next consider the four-fold dimension of this love, to wit, its breadth and length, and depth and height; *Eph. iii 18*. No finite mind, I suppose, will undertake to unfold the full import of this comprehensive account of the love of God in Christ towards his people: more especially, considering, that the apostle declareth *verse 19*, That it is a love that passeth knowledge. I shall therefore only say, That I humbly conceive, the principal scope of the verse, is, to hold out, That the love of God in Christ to the elect, hath expressed and extended itself to the uttermost; even all possible ways, tending unto the glorifying of God the lover, and the bringing about the most perfect happiness unto the party beloved. This, I take to be the most solid account of the manifold expressions used by the Apostle, for the displaying the greatness of the divine love in Christ.

Let us therefore humbly proceed to consider, that love whether divine or human, hath five principal ways of demonstrating its greatness and excellent properties. As 1. By way of strong desire, longing for intimate union and communion with the object beloved. 2^{dly}. By way of noble generosity, bestowing great gifts upon them: And 3^{dly}. In a way of activity and diligence, doing much to obtain them: 4^{thly}. (Which is love's highest elevation)

elevation) By way of offering ; sundergoing the greatest of tryals and severities for their sake. And 5^{thly} By way of great complacency, resting and rejoycing in the object beloved, as in the all desired by them. Accordingly,

Let us survey all these five properties, in relation to this subject. As for the first. The love of desire ; Behold such was the vehement desire of the divine love, towards intimate union and communion with man, that long before his creation, our Lord's breast was full of warm and joyful thoughts upon the very fore-thoughts of man's future and approaching being. *Pro. viii. 31. His delights were with the sons of men ;* yea, and that though at the same time, He equally fore-knew the creation of angels. Yea more, the deity would not appoint a Sabbath for divine contemplation and complacency, till once man should be created. Again, so strong is the desire of the divine love towards his elect amongst men, that as soon as the set time, for making actual love unto them, is come : The Holy Ghost from that very hour, without any further delay, instantly spoileth the strong man, taketh possession of the heart, bespeaketh them for God, and maketh them partakers of the divine nature, and all this to prepare them, for union and communion with himself in time and eternity. And further, alloweth them daily, fresh influences of grace, towards continuing and advancing the aforesaid end : And if at any time, they go astray from him, behold by the pleasant constraint of his love, and fear, he bringeth them back again, *Jer. xxxii. 40. In sum, He dwelleth in them, and walketh with them, and will never leave them nor forsake them. Lev. xxvi. 12. Heb. xiii. 5.* And all this, notwithstanding of the remains of sin, and manifold daily provocations, issuing from the same, *Hos. xiv. 4 5, 6.* Surely then, there is
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here a love, strong as death, which so many waters cannot quench. It is true, the holy angels are honoured to stand by, about the throne, *Zech. iii.* 7 But, behold believers are the spouse of Christ, and the temples of the Holy Ghost ; And if so, undoubtedly then, there is ground to cry out, with the church of old, — *And what will ye see in the Shulamite, Song vi. 13.*

This intimate spiritual union and communion already spoken of, is indeed wonderful ; But behold, the divine love will not rest here ; the deity will yet have a nearer embrace ; yea so intimate, that nearer is not possible. And therefore, He will not only long for his people's creation, dwell and walk in them, when they are made ; but this loving God, will, in the person of his Son, become God-man. Astonishing condescension ! The deity saw, it was impossible the human nature should become the divine ; considering that, infinite and finite can neither convert nor compound ; because the least of finite mixture, would spoil the infinite perfection. But behold, what could not be one in nature, he resolveth, shall be one in person. Accordingly, the Son of God, assumed the human nature into a personal subsistence with the divine ; giving being unto an union and communion, betwixt the two natures in his own person, which for its mysterious manner of subsistence, inconceivable closeness and intimacy, eternal duration, and powerful efficacy, upon the whole members of this glorious head ; who among angels or men, can sufficiently comprehend ?

There be wonderful and extraordinary scripture expressions relative unto this great mystery ; such as that, His name shall be *Immanuel*, God with us, *Isa. vii. 14.* And that God hath purchased the church, with his own blood, *Acts 20. 28.*

Importing that God is come as near to us, and we brought as near God, as possibly can be ; and that the union is so intimate, that the blood, in the veins of the man Christ, was in very deed, the blood of a divine person : The human nature having the same individual subsistence with the divine in the person of the Son of God.

And as to the communion arising from this union, who can unfold that one sentence,—*That in him dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head bodily, Col. ii. 9.* Importing that the human nature in Christ hath not only as much of Grace and glory, as possibly it can contain, but that, (if we may so speak) it lieth so near the divine nature, that the whole fulness of the deity, is really the fulness of that person, who is truly man ; all the essential divine perfections being really in him, and their influence at his disposal. Upon the whole, it is certain, that the most intimate and full displays of the divine love, fulness and glory, unto the elect angels, are all but faint shadows of this union and communion betwixt the two natures, in the wonderful person God-Man. And hence is it, that this mystery begetteth a holy surprize in them ; they comprehend it not, but are exercised in a poring contemplation upon it, *1 Pet. i. 12.* And as they praised at his birth, *Luke 2. 13.* so now in heaven, they are adoring and falling down before him, who in our nature, sits upon the throne, *Rev. 5. 11, 12.*

The second way of love's venting itself, to wit, in point of generous bounty, holds also well here : for behold the greatest of gifts ; an infinite God gives over himself, and his All unto his chosen people ; *I will be your God, and you shall be my people, Jer. 30. 22.* And I am thy exceeding great reward, *Gen. xv. i.* is the very tenor of the promises ; So that God cannot go higher ; he giving to the very utmost

utmost of the state of the King : For in the fore-
said promise and gift, all the divine persons, di-
vine perfections, gifts, graces, glory, are truly and
fully made over unto his people, for time and
eternity, so far as they can contain and enjoy the
same, *1 Cor. iii. 21, 22, 23.* In all which, man
is also exalted highly above the angels. It is true,
the deity hath indeed loved them, and bestowed of
his fulness of grace and glory upon them ; but
considering them to have been the first-born, re-
sembling their glorious creator, far more than
dust and clay could do, and that they were the
elder brother, who never had offended their Fa-
ther : So that what they received, was, as it were,
their patrimony, by birth-right ; whereas with
respect to man, a greater generosity by far appear-
eth, in so far as he was the younger brother, born
of the dust of the footstool, and the prodigal Son,
who had spent all, and sinned greatly against hea-
ven, and against his Father, *Luke xv. 18.* So that
to restore him, and make him equal with the elder,
must surely have a bounty and love in it, contain-
ing in it its obligations. Briefly, the divine hand,
of its great bounty, gave unto the angels ; but be-
hold the heart of him who was God, issued forth
its precious blood unto us, *John xix. 34.* How
far then, the ascendant of love and grace is on our
side above the angels, let the world judge, and
eternity at length declare

The third channel wherein love runneth, is that
of activity, in behalf of the party beloved. And
who can sufficiently trace all the steps of the divine
love this way : For, behold the eternal contri-
vances and preparations betwixt Jehovah and the
mediator before ever man had a being, *Pro. viii.*
23. Behold the early intimation in the garden,
as soon as man's condition required the same, *Gen.*
iii. 15. Consider also all the frequent appearances

of our Lord in human shape under the old testament, to notify the hidden mystery of the future incarnation. Again, let us call to mind the swearing to *Abraham*. *Isaac* and *Jacob*, with respect unto the promised seed, and the everlasting covenant founded thereon. Behold also the remarkable appearance in the bush, for the sake of his church. And as to the angel of the covenant, how did he of old march gloriously before the church, through the wilderness, dividing the red-sea and *Jordan*?

Behold him also punctually observing the very decreed moment of his incarnation, *Gal. iv. 4.* spending thirty years and upwards in the lower world about salvation work, revealing and explaining the eternal counsels of heaven concerning that great salvation: And after, having sealed this testimony with his blood; let us view him ascending into heaven; and there as the Great High Priest and King, *Heb. vi. 20.* Devoting his time and All to the concerns of his people; keeping up this great world (to the vast expence of providence) and that, principally for the sake of his elect, *1 Cor. 3, 22*: And withal protracting the mediatory kingdom, till the least and last of his chosen be made Kings and priests unto their God, *Rev. v. 9, 10.* Astonishing Activity? For earth-worms; forgetting as it were, himself, in minding them: whereas with respect to the angels, he had no such travel, having never left heaven, so much as one minute of time for their sakes. Let us therefore with admiration, cry out, with the spouse; *this is my beloved*, and *this is my friend*, *O ye daughters of Jerusalem*. Briefly, he is our Immanuel, God with us; his wonderful person, natures and offices, are all peculiarly ours
 ——— *Unto us this Child was born, and this Son was given*, *Isai. ix. 6.*

The fourth evidence of great love surpassing all the former, is that of suffering for the object beloved. Hence saith the Apostle, *Greater love than this hath no man, for a man to lay down his life for his friends*, John xv. 13. Accordingly, it was decreed from all eternity, *Acts. 2. 23.* That the Son of God, should suffer for his people: And his sufferings were such, as are above all finite conception.

His vailing and overclouding of the divine nature for thirty years, and upwards: Whereby he that was *God blessed for ever*, came at length to be so far mistaken, that he was not only termed the Carpenter's Son, and *this fellow* but also most blasphemously looked upon as one with Belzebub. Which self-denial, suppose there had never been more is above all human thought or praise: It being just ground of admiration that upon this horrid blasphemy, this lower world, as the scene of it, was not sunk into the lowest hell. Here is indeed great love that the Son of God, would part with his own glory, rather than not make way for procuring ours. But this is not all; The divine love will yet ascend higher, and therefore let us next behold the Son of God, in our nature, not only actually dying for his people, but in his death, undergoing all the agonizing powers of God, devils and men. Briefly, our Lord from love, became the elect's surety, having all their iniquities, from the greatest to the least imputed unto him, *Isai. liii. 6.* Upon which,

The divine offended justice being infinite could forgive him nothing. yea not so much as the least mite: Otherwise it should no more be infinite and perfect justice. Again, this infinite justice being incensed, the divine power must necessarily punish accordingly. The divine sword must now awake; *Zech. 13. 7.* It having been comparatively asleep
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in all its severest judgments till now.—*And who knows the power of his wrath?* Pſal. xc. 11.

Again ſatan knowing well, that this would be the laſt time, in which he ſhould ever have access to draw a ſtroke, immediately at the perſon of this Lion of the tribe of *Judah*; undoubtedly he did his utmoſt to make the bruise of the heel reach and effect the head, as much as was poſſible. Accordingly, our Lord told his diſciples, ſome little time before his ſufferings, that *the prince of this world*, cometh, *John* xiv. 30 *q d.* I know, he is now muſtering his enmity, ſubtilty, malice and power, to make his laſt and greateſt effort againſt me. What theſe terrible aſſaults and temptations were by which (along with the weight of divine wrath) our Lord's ſpirit, notwithſtanding of the hypoaſtatic union, became ſorrowful even unto death, (*Matth.* xxvi. 38) we know not; but certainly, it is a moſt ſtrange and weighty expreſſion of the Apoſtle's, *Heb.* v. 7. That in the days of his fleſh, *When he had offered up prayers and ſupplications, with ſtrong crying and tears unto him, that was able to ſave him from death; he was heard, in that which he feared*; That this fear was abſolutely free of ſin, is infallibly certain, conſidering the hypoaſtatic union which rendered ſin abſolutely impoſſible unto the human nature: but ſtill it is equally certain, that he feared, and that he ſent up ſtrong cries with tears, repeating his ſupplications.

What poſſibly could ſo deeply affect the perſon God Man, and bring him ſo very low, by whom (*Col.* i. 17) all things conſiſt; Who can fully underſtand? ſurely, nothing leſs, than an inconceivable combination of the divine wrath, in its higheſt elevation, and of the diabolical enmity in its moſt deep and malicious temptations, and of human

human rage, in its most agonizing executions, hath all at once met upon him, bruising him, and pouring out his soul unto death, *Isai. liii. 10, 12* And if the furnace, did not burn for ever, it was seven times the more heated : And that it died so quickly out, was no ways owing unto any alleviation allowed by divine justice ; but intirely because of the great dignity and ability of the person suffering, which did fully repair, all the dishonour done to the deity, by his people's sins. Briefly, he being in person, as truly God who suffered, as what he was God whose law was broken ; His sufferings could not fail of making a full recompence and compleat satisfaction. For, if the wound was divine, the balm was *the Blood of God, Acts xx. 28.*

But now, that we may find out the greatness of the divine love in all these sufferings for man, let us consider, that all voluntary sufferings among men, for the sake of one another, hath self-denial in it, and according to the degree of the suffering, such is the degree of the self-denial ; and again in so far, as any person doth truly deny himself for the sake of another, in so far doth he proclaim a greater love to that person, than to himself ; especially where the party can make no return. And if it be so, who can then make the calculation or true amount of the divine love. Briefly, did the Son of God leave the Father's bosom, and become of no reputation ; suffer the hidings of his Father's countenance ? and was he plung'd into the ocean of divine wrath, with all its terrible billows ? And all this for sinful rebellious dust, capable of making no return of their own : Who then among men, will undertake fully to declare the love of God in Christ, unto his chosen people ; They surely presume, that would offer to comprehend it.

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And now, if on this head, the divine love to angels and men, should be compared, behold how much the scale turns unto our side : The angels are indeed favoured with the discoveries of the divine glory, upon which they praise him ; but it was never veiled so much, as one hour for their sakes. Whereas for us, our Lord, though the brightness of his Father's glory, yet became a worm (*Psal. xii. 6*) and no man ; a reproach of men, and the contempt of the people. All ranks disowned him, and in the day of his greatest distress, hid their faces from him : not only *Herod* and *Pilate*, but yea, *Peter* and *Judas* agreed for a time together ; so that *away with him*, and *I know not the man* were, the joint-voice of enemies and friends : Again, the angels were, its true, the holy workmanship of the deity's hands ; but were never (with us) washed in the blood of the Son of God : And therefore,

Here, indeed is the main distinguishing piece of the divine love, betwixt elect angels and men ; For what finite mind can make the just estimate of this precious blood, one drop of which (considering the hypostatic union, making it the blood of God) must evidently be preferable to the whole creation, besides. For suppose, all the angels in heaven, and men upon earth, and the fowls of the mountains, and the flocks of a thousand hills, had been all at once sacrificed, and as an altar, the whole universe had been set on flame : Yet as all this would still have been, but a finite sacrifice, bearing no proportion to the infinite offence done to the deity, and so could never have reconciled one sinner, nor have expiated so much as one sin ; So it's evident, that the smallest drop of this precious blood (it being the blood of an infinite person) was really of more value than the whole world : yea more meritorious and efficacious to salvation,
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than if ten thousand worlds, with all their fulness had been at once sacrificed.

Accordingly we find, that all possible sacrifice and offering, which the world could bring unto the deity, were of no value towards this grand design; And that thereupon, *our Lord* steps in, declaring that seeing; sacrifice and offering God did not desire, that then he himself would come, *Psal. xl. 6. 7.* The sum of all is, that the shedding of this blood, was the piercing the heart (*John xix. 34*) of an infinite person, which in the strictest justice, must be full reparation of any offence done to infinite majesty or honor. The offence only reaching the name of the deity, *Job xxxv. 6.* Whereas the satisfaction reach'd the very soul and life of the redeemer, *Acts iii. 15.*

And finally, such was Christ's love to elect men, that while the angels were expressing their love in comforting him, *Luke xxii. 43.* Behold he is spending both his own and their's, in wrestling, bleeding and dying for us the rebellious: Surely, the greatest truth that ever was preached in mock—*Behold a friend of Publicans and sinners, Matth. xi. 19.* Upon the whole, can any human soul read, and not love him: Can we see such bleeding love, and remember the preciousness of the same, and reflect, that it was for enemies; and yet our hearts not yield and melt before it. If so, it is impossible but we must be reading very carelessly, and as yet without the gospel ear. I beseech thee therefore, *reader*, in the bowels of a crucified Christ, that thou take care, this part of the gospel be not hid unto thee, and that its soul constraining power be not to thee a strange thing, for if it continue so to be, thou art infallibly lost, *2 Cor. iv. 3.* Briefly, The dying love of Christ, attracteth and constraineth every soul in time to a holy faith, love and obedience, whom it is resolved

ved, should enjoy its pleasant streams through eternity. *John* xii. 32. *2 Cor.* v. 14.

The *fifth* and last expression of love, is, That of complacency in enjoyment. And of this there be several great evidences, in the divine love towards man: As *First*, The high affectionate titles given by Christ, unto his people; even in their imperfect and unlovely state: such as, calling them his *Spouse*, his *Brethren* his *love*, his *fair one*, his peculiar people, a chosen generation, and royal priesthood; Yea he carrieth these titles so far, as to term them his *jewels*; *Mal.* iii. 17. To be treasured up by him, in the day of the Lord, as the great product of creation and redemption work, in which he is to rejoice through eternity. Upon all which, considering, that the God of truth, can no ways dissemble nor multiply vain words, how great then must this complacency in his people be. Again *2dly*. His promising and allowing a constant, special and gracious presence upon his people (even while in their imperfect, sinful state and condition); unquestionably speaketh out great satisfaction in them: These are certainly strange words, *Song*, iv. 6. (especially considering the engaging Hallelujahs of the angels, and the redeemed about the throne)——*Until the day break, and the shadows fly away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrhe, and to the hill of frankincense*. And if I should here add our Lord's most *vehement wish* and longing cry by his spirit, *Rev.* xxii. 20. for the quick dispelling of all intervening shadows, betwixt and the appearance of that glorious day; we must surely see the greatest delight to be with our Lord in his people.

Again, *thirdly*. His coming personally a second time, to gather all his elect together, meeting them in the air, and with joy on every side; leading them into the palace of the King, in order unto
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his spending eternity with them, in a mutual giving and receiving of loves, argueth surely a complacency above our present conception. Briefly, the mediatory kingdom being to be delivered up by Christ, to the Father, (*1 Cor. xv. 24*) upon the elect's entry into glory, is interpretatively no less, than if God should say, now, farewell to all the intervening preparatory and perfect my dispensations of providence ; For I have now got my portion of all my labour ; and have now obtain'd my great and last end. My people are now brought home ; I have proclaim'd my abundant goodness, unto them in time, and they are now to proclaim the praise thereof through eternity. They are all now made perfect in *one John xvii. 13.* As I am in my Son, and my Son in me ; they are now one in us. In fine, there is now, perfect conformity in nature amongst us all, making way for, *immediate perfect communion* through eternity, *John xvii. 21. 22, 24.* Astonishing complacency ! Shall dust and ashes be the deity's portion and rest ?

And if now, we consider the whole preceding actings of this love, as proceeding from a deity perfectly blessed in himself, absolutely independent of man, and done to a dependent, undeserving, and hell deserving creature ; And who after all, is incapable of making any return of real addition, to the glory or blessedness of the party loving ; We cannot but acknowledge, That here is the purest, greatest and most inco apprehensible love that ever the world did, or possibly can ever hear of again.

And thus now, we have heard the wonderful and gracious climax of the divine love towards man ; whereby, how much the advantage is our's above the angels, they must be more than blind that see not. So that were old *Jacob* living now under the gospel, he could not but clearly see, That the glorious *ladder*, which he saw of old,
Gen.

Gen. xxviii 12 reaching from heaven to earth, was indeed erected more for himself, and his spiritual seed, than for the angels, which ascended and descended thereupon : As is evident from the 13, and 14 *verses*.

And therefore upon the whole, considering how much the premises make it evident, that our Lord Jesus Christ, hath remembered us in our low condition and how illustriously, the love of Christ hath displayed it self towards mankind : It were certainly most unaccountable to close this subject, until a Word should be spoken towards the causing *our Lord's* glorious name *to be remembered through all generations, Psal. xlv. 17.*

In order to which, let us *first more* generally consider him as the person, whose glorious excellencies, are so great. That God himself, testified and prophesied, of old concerning him, that he should be—*The desire of all nations, Hag. ii. 7.* Importing, that no sooner should the eyes of the elect world be savingly opened towards discerning this extraordinary person, but they should thereupon, all jointly with one heart and voice proclaim him ; the most glorious, excellent and desirable portion in heaven or in earth.

And that our Lord, thus truly deserveth to be *the desire of all nations*, and to become the object of the *superlative esteem, desire, delight and obedience* of the rational human soul ; cannot but most evidently appear, whatever way we consider him : For he being-like the sun, always glorious, under all aspects and different situations whatsoever : So whether we consider him, in the glorious perfections of his person, or in the great fulness and suitability of his mediatorial relations and performances : We shall surely find that a greater than *Solomon* is here.

As for his *Person*, considering him as *God-man*,
who

who can sufficiently describe, either the glory or the wonderfulness thereof? For, He being none less than the great God, *Tit. ii. 13.* Who will undertake to declare what is his name? However certain it is, That, being God, all the most glorious pefections, claims and prerogatives of the deity must appertain unto him: As also he must be the glorious first cause and fountain of all being, pefection and blessedness, among the whole creation; So that the whole of created excellencies and pefections, to be found in heaven or in earth, amongst angels or men, the animate or inanimate creation, are all but streams out of his fulness. Accordingly we are plainly told, *That by him the worlds were made, Heb. i. 2.* And if so, can the soul of any rational reader, seriously reflect upon this divine fulness, and with all remember, That it is with the person God man, who is offering himself, and his all freely unto us in the gospel; And thereupon, not cry out, *That he is altogether lovely,* and justly deserveth to become the desire of all nations. Or canst thou forbear looking off this book a little, and saying from thy soul unto him, *Psal. lxxii. 25. Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none upon earth I desire besides Thee.* In fine appeal to thy reason, whether or not, this great world's glorious creator, must not be a noble all-sufficient portion, unto one finite human soul: And yet our Lord Jesus Christ so much despised, by thousands of the children of men, *is this very person:* by whom in the beginning all things were made, and by whom (since that time) they have all consisted, *John i. 3. Col. i. 17.*

Again, if we should turn from his fulness, and but ponder a little on the wonderfulness of his person, upon the account of the hypostatic union, as being both, truly God and truly man, and that in one and the same person; I say, in that respect;

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What finite mind is it, That can find out adequate expressions, for unfolding the manifold wonders, implied in that extraordinary union? For *First*, Should we speak of the great depth of wisdom appearing in the contrivance of this glorious union, Then we cannot but see the treasures of wisdom to be here. For, when the cry came to heaven, that man had sinned, behold the divine justice proclaimed next, That sinning man must be infallibly destroyed: At the intimation of which, electing love, could not but stand astonished: Again the essence being infinite, the whole of finite angels and men, could never repair the divine honour and glory, so as to pacify an offended deity.

Upon all which, there was (as it were for a time) deep silence in heaven, amazement among the angels above, *Egyptian darkness*, and horror in *Paradise* here below: Satan triumphing, man despairing, justice brandishing the flaming sword, and the electing decree musing upon its seeming abolition: Till all of a sudden, the infinite divine mind broke out, and proclaimed, the great mystery; of God manifested in the flesh. Upon which, there was instantly found, an equal unto the offended deity, perfectly capable of obeying and suffering, to satisfy divine justice, and thereby fully to open the great depth and fountain of electing love, in order to it issuing forth, in all its blessed purposes and streams towards the redeemed of the Lord. And thus God *hath blessed his people with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ*, Eph. i. 3. Upon all which, I cannot but beseech the reader, as in the sight of God, to ponder a little on this wonderful *Union*, in our glorious Immanuel; and thereupon cordially to acknowledge and cry out with the Apostle — *Christ the power and wisdom of God*, 1 Cor. i. 24.

Again

Again *Secondly*, should we speak of the astonishing condescension in it ; who is it that can declare it ? The great God assuming dust into a personal union with himself. and allowing himself to be termed the man Christ Jesus ; who yet in person, is none less than the great God, 1 *Tim.* ii. 5. Who possibly can reflect on these things, and not acknowledge, That beyond all controversy, there is a condescension in them, which justly required an eternity to admire.

But again *Thirdly*, above all, if we consider the great and manifold designs of love towards men, which this union was pregnant with, we shall certainly find most just ground to say Amen, unto *Isaiah's* description of our Lord of old, to wit, *That his name is wonderful*, *Isai.* ix. 6 For behold how manifold wonders are implied here : God becoming man, that he might die on earth for man ; and doing this, that so thereupon he might next intercede for man in heaven : And again becoming man, that he might (so to speak) thereby qualify and proportion the divine majesty, fulness and glory, for a nearer and fuller approach unto the finite powers and capacities of the human souls of his people And lastly, that by continuing and appearing in our nature for ever in heaven, amongst the redeemed company ; He might thereby assure them of the eternity of his love, and consequently of the everlastingness of their glory and happiness. I say, considering all these designs complexly ; It certainly must be owned, That the love of Christ, in becoming God-man, is a love containing some wonders in it, which will infallibly transcend all possible comprehension, praise and admiration, even of the souls of just men made perfect. And hence it is, that the song of that blessed company, shall still be *new*, *Rev.* v. 9. And indeed, no wonder, for even the most

elevated admiration of the most perfected soul about the throne, (though the highest act of the rational praising soul) yet still being but finite, can never bear full proportion, unto the infinite wisdom, condescension and love, which appear so conspicuously, in this glorious and wonderful hypostatic union.

And therefore upon the whole, who can refuse, but a God thus becoming man, and that to render himself capable of dying for and glorifying rebellious man ; must certainly found the highest and best claim, of all others in the world, unto the hearts of the children of men. And therefore, had we but the gratitude, which becometh the rational human nature, there would certainly be a holy emulation, amongst the children of men (to the utmost of their power) to return to our Lord a full equivalent of ardent love, and zealous obedience, as a recompence for all the enraged enmity and obstinate rebellion which encounters and sustains from the apostate, rejected and desperate angels.

In short, whatever qualifications are necessary, towards the rendring our Saviour altogether lovely unto the children of men, behold they are all to be found eminently with him. For *First*, If all the blessings of divine electing love be sealed up and restrained by offended justice (as hath been already cleared) there is with him, a perfect satisfaction. And *2dly*. If even after, justice is satisfied, and this sealed fountain of electing love is broke open, there still remain great inherent obstacles of strong plagues and corruptions, in the way of sinners conversion and compleat redemption ; Let us next behold, Almighty glorious perfections, with our Lord, for triumphing over all such opposition in his way.

To clear all which, let us consider that our
glorious

glorious Redeemer, being truly God, and thereupon a person of infinite dignity, his passive obedience, could not possibly fail of repairing fully any honour which God lost, by the elects sin. And on the other hand, his perfect active obedience (considering the greatness of the person thus obeying) cannot possibly fail of honouring God as much, as what the whole perfect obedience of all the finite elect could ever have done : So that it is evident, there must certainly be in the obedience of this wonderful person *God-man*, both a compleat satisfaction, unto offended divine justice ; and also, a compleat and most perfect righteousness, for rendring the persons and performances, of all believing penitent sinners, perfectly acceptable unto God and towards the intituling them unto eternal life ; so that every true believer hath solid ground, to say with the church of old — *Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength, Isa. xlv. 24.* Again our Lord being truly God-man, and thereupon the fulness of the God-head dwelling in him bodily, from hence ariseth a glorious all-sufficiency for the whole great acts and performances, of his mediatory offices. For being the God, who at first created the soul, in all its faculties and powers, together with its perfect knowledge of God, perfect love and conformity unto him, and all this out of meer nothing ; what possible obstacle can stand in his way, in the carrying on the conversion and edification of his elect. Briefly, the highest power, with Satan or sin, being all but finite and limited, and always subjected unto the Almighty arm, it is thereupon evident, that in the day of his converting and sanctifying power, the grossest Atheism ignorance, enmity, any unbelief which shall ever be found among and of the hearts of the children of men, must give way unto him, and his grace ; hastening and

flying before the subduing, conquering and irresistible influence of the same, *Psa* cx. 3. In fine, he is the all-wise God for our instruction, and the God of all grace for our sanctification; and the Almighty God for our perfect victory and compleat redemption. And finally, the supreme and most high God towards our solemn justification and public acquittance at the great and last day; so that the Apostle had the most solid grounds, to proclaim unto the world, that this Christ would certainly become unto all his people, — *Wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption*, 1 Cor. i. 30.

And therefore, to conclude all, What a glorious, excellent and wonderful person must our Lord Jesus Christ be? Who is the express image of his Father's person, the brightness of his Father's glory and the appointed heir of all things: The glorious world's creator; the lapsed world's redeemer and restorer; the great foundation of all the divine councils, and substance of all the divine revelations. Briefly, The deity's eternal delight, the glory of heaven, the admiration of angels, and the great subject of the new and eternal song of the redeemed: And in fine, who is God over all, bless'd for ever, Amen. And therefore no wonder, if the apostle should did annex such a grave, solemn and awful conclusion in his epistle unto the Corinthians, against all despisers and opposers, of this glorious Lord, and gracious redeemer; as positively to say, — *If any man (of what quality so ever,) love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maranatha.* 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

CHAPTER VIII.

The eternal plan of predestination relative to angels and men, being perfected in the divine councils ; its accomplishment in time, cannot possibly fail. Because, 1. Of the essential infallibility of the divine mind : And 2dly. Because of the the immutability of the divine will in fulfilling the several parts of the aforesaid plan, the glorious perfections of infinite wisdom, spotless holiness, perfect righteousness, inexorable Justice, incomprehensible love, and bowels of mercy, do all wonderfully conspire, and mutually embrace one another. The creation of angels and men, is scarce well over, till the wheels of providence move apace towards the performance of the eternal decrees. A depth of wisdom shineth therein, even while the original design of the angelic and human creation seemed to be inverted. The principal means for accomplishing the foresaid glorious complex plan, are eight in number. All discoursed in their true natural method ; secundum rem gestam, or according to the very order of time, in which an All-wise providence brought them about. The first is, the standing of the elect angels, while all the rest sinned and fell. The second is, God's glorifying accordingly, sovereign love and glorious justice ; upon the foresaid standing and sinning angels. Some difficulties, relative to the angelic apostacy, considered and cleared ; together with the nature, and benious aggravations of their rebellion. in the midst of all which, let us accurately remark and behold, the perfect innocence of the eternal, divine, latent, distinguishing decree ; it being absolutely unknown unto them. Their hell is according to their nature, spiritual ; containing the morality, of the

old literal curse, pronounced upon the natural serpent, in the garden. This old serpent, now turneth a hellish, endless circle betwixt enmity and impotency, enraged blasphemies, and the fresh repeated strokes of increased vengeance. The elect angels upon their standing, are confirmed by Almighty grace, and the immutable divine decree. Their enjoyment of the deity, must be great, in proportion to their enlarged capacities and powers, and thereupon their praises of sovereign distinguishing love, must be exceeding high. It is wonderful, how quickly the whole angelic part of the eternal plan is fulfilled.

HA V I N G now seen the eternal divine platform relative to angels and men, most wisely and variously disposing both, to the glory of the divine sovereignty, justice and mercy, and thereby laying the foundation of the whole procedure of divine providence, towards both, in time and eternity : We may next assure ourselves that the event will infallibly, accordingly hold. For the divine mind being infallible, and the divine will immutable, there is therefore an absolute necessity of the event, with respect to the accomplishment of all decreed ; yea and that even unto the least jot or tittle ; accordingly we are told, the *Counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations, Psal. xxxiii. 11.* And seeing nothing marred the creating decree, in accomplishing of which, the divine mind and will, had all angels and men to contrive and call out of nothing ; far less is it possible, that any thing can let or hinder the disposing decree, wherein an all-wise and Almighty God hath the creature only to influence and over-rule, but not to make again out of nothing. The potter that can make the clay, and give being unto it ; may certainly far more easily form and impress it.

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The Plan being now in point of contrivance perfected ; what we can conceive, falls in next under the divine thought, must be, how, actually to accomplish all its parts, and in accomplishing them, how to act so congruously to the infinite purity and holiness ; as there may not be, on the one hand, the least umbrage with the deity, of being either the author of sin, or of dealing injuriously with such noble creatures, as what angels and men are, in his bringing about the glory of his sovereignty and justice : And so, as on the other hand, there may not be the least neglect of glorious justice, in exalting the riches of love and mercy.

Accordingly let us proceed to consider the wonderful procedure of the divine providence, most wisely and gradually accomplishing the several parts of the foresaid eternal complex contrivance : And we shall at once clearly behold infinite wisdom, spotless holiness, perfect righteousness, inexorable justice, incomprehensible love, and bowels of mercy, all embracing and mutually kissing one another ; and all agreeing that the glory of the whole should be consulted. So that here it is indeed, where that remarkable scripture is accomplish'd, *Psal. lxxxv. 10. 11. Mercy and truth are met together : Righteousness and peace have kissed each other : Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven.* Briefly it is impossible, that any one essential perfection in the deity, can neglect or overreach another. The divine nature being absolutely free of all composition, must certainly much more be free of all contrariety or opposition. For seeing *quicquid est in Deo sit ipse Deus*, every thing in God being God himself, it is impossible, he can neglect or obscure the glory of any of his divine perfections, but must take care of them all.

It is only to *us*, but not to God, that one attribute seemeth more dear unto him than another. Mercy indeed, unto his own *Israel*, is above all his other works, but so is justice also in its turn, when meeting with *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*.

These truths being premised and evidently certain; nothing now remains, but that we should observe how quickly (but withal most orderly) the wheels of providence, now move towards the performance of the manifold purposes contained in the fore-said eternal plan.

Accordingly angels and man, being created both of them mutable and fallible, they both actually sin and fall: some of the former: the head, and in him the whole race of the latter. Wonderful dispensation; so sudden and astonishing a change! The principal heads of the whole creation: The one created the first day, and the other the sixth; and both of them sinning and falling, (for any thing we know to the contrary) before ever the second sabbath cometh to pass. Monstrous ingratitude! allowing the glorious creator but one sabbath to contemplate and rejoice over all his works as very good; and so far as in them lay, disappointing him of all the designed glory from the creation. Briefly, where was now the all-wise and Almighty God?

Here was indeed, it must be owned great confusion and disorder; the creation unhinged, yea, God seemingly dethroned: but behold, in all this, no surprize in the least unto the deity, no, not at all; *He is still on the throne*, and the divine wisdom, only displaying itself more gloriously than ever. To clear which, let us only but ponder a little, that the original order and glory of the creation, had now appeared both to angels and men, and had spoke forth the great perfections of their author; but behold a more glorious model
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and dispensation was from eternity contrived ; and therefore the model, must but just appear on the scene, and then in the depth of wisdom, instantly give way unto one by far more worthy, both of the persons and perfections, of the deity. For understanding of all which, the more perfectly, let us consider, that,

The divine wisdom, power and goodness, had indeed acted their part gloriously, in the six days works in a creating way, calling a great world out of nothing ; but as yet they had no ways appeared in a conquering and triumphing manner, as trampling upon the greatest powers and difficulties. The divine wisdom, had indeed made the old serpent naturally most wise, but had not yet out witted him, turning the cannon upon him, in his conquest over the woman, *Gen. iii. 15.* The divine power had indeed made him strong, but had not yet made him to tremble, *Jam. ii. 19.* The divine justice had threatened sin, but had not yet *digged Tophet*, nor bound the rebels with chains. The divine goodness had indeed bestowed the image of God, upon innocent man, but as yet had not from love become man, and that upon design to make the Son of God capable of dying for rebellious man. Briefly, before the fall, the deity sat only on the throne, by harmonious consent, beholding the obedience of a regular submissive creation, whereas now upon rebellion appearing in heaven and in earth, he sits by glorious conquest, over-topping the greatest opposition. The maker of heaven and earth, was, before the fall, the highest inscription to be found written over the gate ; whereas now, since the fall, the *Lord of Lords*, and *King of Kings*, is to be found written upon his vesture, *Rev. xix. 16.*

In fine, all the parts of the whole scene erected at first by the creation, were but temporal and
mutable

mutable, subject to change ; which bearing no proportion unto an eternal unchangeable deity ; wisdom required the scene should be permitted quickly to change, and gradually vanish away ; that so way might be paved, for a far more glorious, eternal, immutable state both of persons and things ; and therefore angels and men, are not only to be immortal, but must also be made infallible and immutable, and in proportion unto them, a *new heaven* and a *new earth* (no more to be spoiled by sin) must be reared up, never to go down any more, *Rev. xxi. 1.* Upon the whole, let us believe it ; that in the divine permission of man's sin, there hath been a depth of Wisdom : a greater and wiser, than either proud and subtle *Lucifer*, or aspiring *Adam* was here. So that, *where art thou, and what hast thou done ?* (*Gen. iii. 9, 11, and 13.*) were not the questions of a surprized, but of a well advised and determined deity : And hence the intimation of the great project of redemption, was so ready at hand, as having been of eternal contrivance. But now,

To return to the *line* of the discourse, to wit the tracing the whole gradual steps of the wise and wonderful procedure of the divine providence, as accomplishing in time, the unalterable measures which were laid down from eternity, relative to angels and men. It will be necessary to survey these seven or eight extraordinary and remarkable events, brought about in the course of time ; whereby the whole divine projects, relative unto the fixed and immutable state and condition of angels and men, through all eternity, are not only exactly fulfilled ; but in the manner of their accomplishment, so much of deep wisdom, untainted holiness, and sovereign influence appeareth, that the ingenuous and judicious reader, cannot shun to observe, the deity no manner of way, imposing upon

upon the freedom, or forcing the power of the angelic and human wills, and yet at the same time, infallibly accomplishing his own. So that with Moses we have just ground to sum up our thoughts of God in this matter, by crying out, *He is the rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are judgment, a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he*, Deut. xxxii. 4.

Towards discoursing these events the more distinctly, I know no method so proper, as *secundum rem gestam*, considering them in the very same order, in which they were most wisely placed, and accordingly in the conduct of divine providence, were brought about; and they are in number eight.

As *first*, The standing of the elect angels, while the rest sinned and fell. *2dly*, God accordingly glorifying sovereign love and glorious justice, upon the foresaid standing and sinning angels. *3dly*, The remarkable transgression or covenant, which God made with perfect Adam, as the moral head of all his posterity. *4thly*, The breach of this transgression upon Adam's part; with whom all his posterity sinned and fell. *5thly*, The intimation and erection of the *new covenant* of grace, for accomplishing the designed glory of the divine love, upon the vessels of mercy. *6thly*, The incarnation, death and resurrection of the Son of God, for the bringing about all the great and gracious purposes of the foresaid covenant. *7thly*, God's carrying towards all the rest of impatient unbelieving mankind, according to the tenor of the first broken covenant, for the bringing about the praise of glorious justice: And then *8thly*, At the last and great day, proceeding with, and disposing of angels and men, according to the fundamental eternal counsels of divine predestination, and suitably unto the tenor of their own actings through the course of time.

And

And thus through eternity, The state of angels and men, together with the new heavens and new earth, shall continue fixed and immutable, that so a glorious eternal God, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning, may have all things suitable to himself; and (justice being now glorified, and the spoiled creation perfectly restored, *Acts* iii. 21) he may be no more vexed nor grieved with the *monstrous changeableness* and *rebellion*, of the rational, nor with the *fluctuating vanity* of the inanimate part of the creation.

And now to return to the first of those remarkable events, to wit, The standing of some of the angels, while all the rest sinned and fell. Let us remember the sovereign eternal decree, relative to them; as distinguishing the elect angels; (*1 Tim.* 5. 21.) from those who did apostatize. And we shall find the very first opening of providence in the first remarkable dispensation of time, to have been the elect angels their standing, and persevering in their original holiness and obedience; while the whole remaining part of the angelic race sinned and fell. Astonishing infallibility of the divine mind! Behold, how soon the eternal decree taketh place in time?

The sin of the angels not being ours, nor any remedy provided for it, it is not of our concern to say much about it. However, to keep the thread of the discourse unbroken, I shall offer a few thoughts concerning it.

The nature of their sin, so far as is revealed, was certainly the most presumptuous and provoking pride, the creature possibly was capable of, *1 Tim.* iii. 6. says the apostle: Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

But as to all the particular ingredients of the angelic apostacy; The manner of its introduction among

among those perfect spirits, situate in the holy habitation: Its growing to a numerous combination; Its actual and bold commission in the face of the deity, who dare be positive, or undertake fully to describe? only from the nature of things, and the reality of the event. some few remarks may be offered, as rational and probable.

These noble and high born spirits saw themselves the chief of the creation: They saw their knowledge great, their power mighty, their number vast, their nature spiritual, and next unto immortal. Again having been witnesses of the divine procedure in creation, from the foundation to the capstone; certainly thereupon, the nature of second causes, their subordination and dependance upon one another, were much unvail'd unto them: From all which they saw the great influence, by reason of their natural knowledge and power, they themselves might have upon the whole.

Again, they saw the deity but one, and themselves many. And in the divine nature, did behold independency and self-sufficiency, but understood not how. Briefly, They saw themselves before the throne, and of all the creation, nearest unto it.

All these great speculations together; (those spirits being left to the freedom of their own will) and the time being now come, for the divine wisdom's proclaiming, only independent, self-sufficient being, and that God omnipotent did only reign: I say, matters being thus stated: How far, the foresaid great speculations made way, (through their misimprovement of original knowledge and grace) unto a sinful discontent, with their first estate; and unto a fond supposition of self-sufficiency and independency (the probable foundation of their apostacy) and thereupon unto an aspiring design, towards a higher and more glorious

glorious condition, who can or will positively determine? Which project, if at first contrived in the breast of some of the chief among them, *Matth. xxv. 41.* and communicated to the rest under them; and withal great numbers, even legions going in unto the conspiracy; It certainly could not, but thereupon prove the more taking and promising among them. And withal,

The divine light and grace by this time; upon such an atrocious motion (as deeply resenting the same) having most justly deserted them; Behold thereupon, They have proceeded to open rebellion, attempting the regalia of heaven, in declaring, their own wills should be their God, and that they would stand and act by themselves: For to suppose any attempt inferior to this, considering the rebellion was in heaven, and in the face of the deity, and of the holy angels, reason can never allow.

Accordingly if we consult the scriptures in relation to this matter, we are plainly told, that the *sinning angels kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, Jude, 6. verse.* importing their discontent with their original condition; and their design to have aspired higher. See also *2 Pet. ii. 4.* And if we shall further examine satan's grand temptation to man in the garden, *Gen. iii. 5.* ——— *Yea shall be as Gods;* We have just ground to suppose, that the grand motive with themselves, hath been a high and fond (though groundless) supposition, that upon their revolt, they should upon the account of some vast encrease of experimental knowledge and new perfections following thereupon, become as so many Gods. Infinite, they only seeing the deity, all-over goodness; and all actual vindictive justice and wrath, being as yet absolute mysteries unto them; They have read some letters of the deity's name proclaim;

proclaiming him abundant in goodness, but have not gone on fully unto the end ; reading also, that he will by no means clear the guilty : They saw the glorious light and joy of heaven, but dreamed not of the utter darkness and chains of hell : And thereupon have adventured the bold and fatal enterprise.

As for the heinous provoking aggravations of their sin, they are certainly manifold ; In so far as, they were the creators's first-born, owing great love unto him. They were the head of the creation, obliged unto exemplary gratitude and obedience. Their original perfections were great, capaciting them for a great return. Their sin was against the greatest light, and perpetrated in the very face of the deity, and in the midst of the holy temple ; forcing (as it were) the divine majesty and honour, in the very presence of the King. It was also without all extrinſick temptation, or enticing intimate companion. It was contrary unto the consent and practice of their fellows, the elect angels, whom they understood to be originally as wise and perfect as themselves : And which greatly aggravated the crime, it was done before they had well begun to sing the just praises of their glorious and bountiful creator.

The conspiracy was also great in respect of the vast number of the traitors ; They not sinning in their head, as what mankind did in Adam, but the whole of the rebels were individually and actually present, consenting unto, and influencing the rebellion. The Plot was also the highest that possibly they could go ; even to dethrone the deity. (at least as to them) and so ascend the throne themselves. Monstrous ingratitude ! Presumptuous rebellion ! incensing treason ! Justly punished with irrevocable condemnation, *Jude 6. verse.* In fine, a conspiracy undermining the government,

must of necessity be punished, or the kingdom shaketh, 1 *Kings* i. 52.

But now while we are discoursing of this high rebellion, let us accurately observe, the perfect innocence of the eternal latent decree, as being absolutely unknown to the sinning angels: And therefore, could never possibly affect their wills: But they of free choice, allowing and cherishing the thoughts of such high treason to spring up, provoked the divine jealousy and majesty, most justly to desert them; leaving them to run their voluntary fatal course, to their utter destruction: and seeing they wilfully despised, the great expressions of the divine goodness, nothing could be more rational, than that they should fall, in the hands of severe and impartial justice.

In short, Their sin was absolutely of themselves, and was committed with a high hand, attacking at once all the divine perfections saying, They would confound infinite wisdom, mock at sovereignty, defy almighty power, despise the divine holiness, truss at the divine resentment: And thus most presumptuously daring the deity, and aspiring at his crown; It is evident, the glory of all the foresaid divine perfections, became deeply concerned, to cause such monstrous rebels to know, that the same hand, that had placed them in the highest heaven, could sink and chain them in the lowest hell, 2 *Pet.* ii. 4. And, that aspiring after this manner, to be above or equal with God, was a sin never to be purged away. More especially, considering that the holy angels (originally no more perfect than they) continued most faithful, loyal and obedient subjects; founding the high Allelujahs about the throne. And therefore it was most congruous to the divine wisdom, holiness and righteousness, to make an infinite difference, and eternal distance betwixt them and the rebellious

rebellious faction. As what we are told, shall be done by the doom, that is to be passed against them at the great day, *Matth. xrv. 41.*

As for their hell, it is according to their nature; spiritual. The remembrance of the ancient and great glory of the deity, whose face they did once behold; and of the excellency and sweetness of the divine favour, which they once enjoyed: The lively reflections of their once exalted honourable situation about the throne, and refreshing praises, of the most high, which filled their mouths: The review of the great perfection of grace, with which they were at first created, and improved by the holy angels, while misimproved by them: I say all these, together with the constant remembrance of the wilful irreparable loss of such high and valuable blessings; undoubtedly giveth hourly rise, unto most severe and agonizing impressions, imbittering their spirits, beyond all human conception.

Again on the other hand, they carrying always about with them, a deep sense of the divine vengeance and fury of pure unmixed wrath; Behold thereupon, they are more and more invenom'd with enmity, malice and blasphemy, against the deity: which again introduceth new lashes from the Almighty, filling their consciences, with inconceivable anguish and horror; as seeing an omnipotent, holy, just and jealous God implacably incensed against them: All which, considering the greatness of their souls and consciences, cannot but produce a hell, consisting of double stripes, and which is beyond any thing obvious unto human consideration: more especially, if we consider, that to consummate all, they are possessed with the lively and constant ideas of the eternity of their torments, and of the certain approach of the great day, in which they are to be publicly

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condemned.

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In short, Their sin was absolutely of themselves, and was committed with a high hand, attacking at once all the divine perfections saying, They would confound infinite wisdom, mock at sovereignty, defy almighty power, despise the divine holiness, rush at the divine resentment: And thus most presumptuously daring the deity, and aspiring at his crown; It is evident, the glory of all the foresaid divine perfections, became deeply concerned, to cause such monstrous rebels to know, that the same hand, that had placed them in the highest heaven, could sink and chain them in the lowest hell, 2 *Pet.* ii. 4. And, that aspiring after this manner, to be above or equal with God, was a sin never to be purged away. More especially, considering that the holy angels (originally no more perfect than they) continued most faithful, loyal and obedient subjects; sounding the high Allelujahs about the throne. And therefore it was most congruous to the divine wisdom, holiness and righteousness, to make an infinite difference, and eternal distance betwixt them and the rebellious

rebellious faction. As what we are told, shall be done by the doom, that is to be passed against them at the great day, *Matth.* xv. 41.

As for their hell, it is according to their nature; spiritual. The remembrance of the ancient and great glory of the deity, whose face they did once behold; and of the excellency and sweetness of the divine favour, which they once enjoyed: The lively reflections of their once exalted honourable situation about the throne, and refreshing praises, of the most high, which filled their mouths: The review of the great perfection of grace, with which they were at first created, and improved by the holy angels, while misimproved by them: I say all these, together with the constant remembrance of the wilful irreparable loss of such high and valuable blessings; undoubtedly giveth hourly rise, unto most severe and agonizing impressions, imbittering their spirits, beyond all human conception.

Again on the other hand, they carrying always about with them, a deep sense of the divine vengeance and fury of pure unmixed wrath; Behold thereupon, they are more and more invenom'd with enmity, malice and blasphemy, against the deity: which again introduceth new lashes from the Almighty, filling their consciences, with inconceivable anguish and horror; as seeing an omnipotent, holy, just and jealous God implacably incensed against them: All which, considering the greatness of their souls and consciences, cannot but produce a hell, consisting of double stripes, and which is beyond any thing obvious unto human consideration: more especially, if we consider, that to consummate all, they are possessed with the lively and constant ideas of the eternity of their torments, and of the certain approach of the great day, in which they are to be publicly

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condemned.

condemned, and disgraced before God, angels and men, 1 Cor. vi. 3. and in which they are for ever to be confined unto the bottomless pit ; enduring the new and additional measures of wrath due unto them, for all their sinful influence upon the wickedness of this lower world in time.

And thus the heavy curse against the natural serpent of old in the garden, *Gen. iii. 14.* shall now in earnest be fulfilled upon the true old serpent. He must now *go upon his belly*. I mean lie chain'd and confined in hell : So that he shall now no more come forth to satisfy his malice and pride, as the God of this world, nor as prince of the power of the air, nor shall he now be any more adored in his oracles and responses in his ancient temples. Again, as for the other part of the curse, *he must now also lick the dust all the days of his life* : living upon himself, and sucking his own blood, by undergoing the agonizing impressions of the inconceivable millions of sins, in tempting to which, he formerly had his only satisfaction. In fine, his vehement torments, will cause him to wish for annihilation ; To which his knowledge will reply, he cannot ; Upon this his enmity afresh will blaspheme, which again will provoke the divine justice and power to make a new impress of the divine wrath and vengeance upon him. And thus he shall turn this hellish circle through all the endless ages of eternity.

By all which, the praise of powerful and glorious justice, upon those numerous and mighty rebels, shall be eternally accomplished ; which was one grand design of the sovereign eternal decree relative to the angels.

As to what concerneth the other branch of the decree relative to the elect among them, behold accordingly

cordingly they stand and were confirmed by Almighty Grace : So that they neither will nor can sin And hence they are not only called the elect angels, 1 *Tim* 5. 21. but most frequently termed in scripture the holy angels, *Matth.* xxv. 31. and they are by our Lord, *Matth* vi. 10. no less, than spoken of as a pattern of perfect obedience — Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven ; meaning, as done by the angels in heaven. And through eternity, they are along with the redeemed to stand about the throne, admiring our wonderful Immanuel, and singing the praises of the deity, in all his glorious perfections, *Zech.* iii. 7. *Rev* vii. 11.

But having spoken somewhat fully of them on the head of their creation, I shall not here enlarge. In short, they being spirits of great perfections, and so capable of great enjoyment of God : And withal remembring their obligations unto a distinguishing preserving decree, founded upon no merit in them ; it is impossible, but their praises of the sovereignty and freedom of the divine love and goodness, will be performed, with the greatest reverence, affection, zeal and admiration, their natures are capable of.

And thus the other grand design of the eternal decree upon their part, shall be most gloriously accomplished. Upon all which, let us accurately observe with astonishment, how quickly and infallibly, the whole eternal divine model relative to the angelic nature, took place in all its parts ; and thereupon finally, let us with praise and admiration cry out, Sovereign God ! distinguishing even the great angels into vessels of honour and dishonour ! Irresistible will, of one mind, and who can turn it ! *Job.* xxiii. 13. adorable deity, amiable for love, above comprehension : and glorious in justice beyond all conception.

CHAPTER IX.

God having performed all his sovereign pleasure and will, upon the high and glorious angels : Shall he not much more with respect unto men ; the potsherds of the earth ? The first remarkable event, in time, for accomplishing the foresaid model, as relative to man, was the transaction of the covenant of works with Adam, as the moral head of all his posterity. The nature, condition and terms of that first covenant considered and declared. The great equity and reasonableness thereof, evinced by several considerations. The grand objection against Adam's being constituted the moral head of his unborn posterity ; in a matter of such great consequence ; and their being punished for his transgression ; at great length cleared and answered. In the issue it is found, that there was no less than a great depth of wisdom, in making Adam the moral Representative of mankind ; it making way for the second Adam's being made the Representative and redeeming head of the elect : While on the other hand, the whole race of the apostate angels, who all, sinned individually and actually and not in one common head (as what men did) are condemned eternally, without the least hope, of recovery : Considering, the elect at first only, sinned in Adam, and therefrom derived the corruption of their nature : The Socinian objections against our Lord's satisfaction, fall greatly to the ground. The elect being as really and truly represented by Christ, in his active and passive obedience, in their name and room, in the covenant of grace, as what they were in the obedience and

and disobedience of the first Adam, as their moral head, in the covenant of works. And yet after all, God continueth most just, in punishing the remaining part of impenitent unbelieving mankind. Some difficulties relative to original sin, as to its manner of conveyance, and its effects upon children dying in their infancy, discoursed and cleared.

HA V I N G discoursed and heard the angelic part of the eternal plan, wherein a sovereign God performed all his pleasure, without any regard to their great dignity, or high order of creation: let us who was made lower than them, and who are the dust upon the footstool, while they were noble spirits about the throne, thereupon learn, with great meekness and reverence, to read and ponder the determining will of this great God, with respect unto man, who is but the potsherd of the earth.

To clear all which, let us consider the *Third* remarkable event in time, tending to the accomplishment of the eternal plan, to wit, The solemn transaction or covenant, which God made with Adam, immediately upon his creation.

The sum of which is, That Adam as the moral head and representative of all his posterity; should give perfect obedience to the law of God, written upon his heart; and in particular, as a proof of intire subjection unto a sovereign Lord, and of grateful acknowledgment of the divine generosity and bounty, should not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, *Gen. ii. 17.* And withal to make this covenant the more clear, solemn and firm there were included in the very bottom of it, 1. Two most binding intrinsic articles; and 2dly, Two extrinseck confirming seals, were annexed unto it, containing in them two of the greatest

motives unto obedience, the rational nature was capable of.

As for the two *intrinsic articles* of the foresaid covenant : The First was, a most terrible, comprehensive, explicit threatening, in case of disobedience : even *death* in its full latitude, *natural, spiritual and eternal*.-----For in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die, *Gen. ii. 17.* 2dly, In this explicit threatening, there was most clearly contained, a very full and encouraging *implicit promise*, in case of obedience ; even life, in its full opposite import unto death, to wit, *natural, spiritual and eternal* : For, death in the threatening being connected with disobedience, it is certain and evident, that God according to this covenant, could never introduce or inflict death upon mankind while obedient. Yea suppose there had never been any such covenant, justice itself as essential to God, would have been an eternal *guardian* to innocent man, from all evil of punishment.

Again, there were two most remarkable *extrinsic Seals*, annexed unto this covenant, to wit, The Tree of life, and the Tree of knowledge of good and evil. The names and designs of which being notified unto, and well understood by man, they became two most significant symbols demonstrating as it were, with the finger, not only to the mind, but also to the very bodily eye ; 1. A possibility of sinning, thereby to make them exceeding cautious. 2dly, - The certainty of the terrible punishment upon disobedience : The very name of the tree, pointing out the fatal exchange of the experimental knowledge of evil, instead of good, that should certainly ensue upon the eating thereof, 3dly, Demonstrating also, the equal certainty of glorious and everlasting life, upon the performing of perfect obedience : Man being for a time to have been continued in this lower world

world to admire and praise its maker, and thereafter to ascend the higher house, to rest with God, man's only center. And thus did God transact with man, with the greatest plainness and uprightness imaginable, leaving no room for mistake or equivocation.

The high reasonableness of this covenant, cannot but appear with a witness, upon the impartial and serious consideration of the following particular heads relative thereto.

As First, Behold how highly honourable this transaction was unto man: The image of God, had in his creation, greatly advanced him, exalting him as head of the lower world: But till this covenant was once transacted, the power that made him, might have immediately annihilated him: The word that called him out of nothing, might have sent him back again, with all his glory to his original dust; And in all this, not the least wrong done to the clay. Whereas, by the foresaid covenant, man had the great God, not only related to him as creator, but as a covenanted, sworn and obliged Lord, to bestow everlasting life upon him, and all his posterity, upon his obedience. And certainly considering the sovereignty and absolute dominion of God over man; who might justly have required perfect obedience from him without any such explicit and extensive promise of life, and also have punished eternally upon disobedience, the greatest of condescension upon God's part, and of honor done to man, appeareth in this transaction; more especially, if we consider, the infinite inconceivable distance betwixt the deity and the dust.

Again, as for the equity of the demand of this covenant, to wit, perfect obedience from perfect man, to a God essentially and necessarily holy, and to a creator, who had bestowed being and all upon him; Reason itself can never justly form one
thought

thought against it. And as for the reasonableness and equity of the promise and threatening contained in this covenant : perfect obedience being the just and natural tribute of creation, necessarily due unto the deity, from the rational dependent perfect creature ; it is evident that the greatest reward innocent obedient man could require, was but a parallel continuance of these original glorious perfections and blessed enjoyments, wherewith he was created ; I say, that these should be allowed unto him, during his obedience : But could never with any reason or confidence, (had not God, proposed and condescended so to do) have required of a sovereign God, a solemn divine promise confirmed by visible seals, either for his temporal happiness on earth, or for his glorious transplantation into heaven.

So that here was not only the height of justice and equity, but wonderful love and condescension. Man still singularly dealt with ; for no such covenanting or condescending love ever recorded, with respect to the elect angels. They had indeed a decree for their election ; whereas when man is the party treated with ; behold then there is not only a decree of election, but a solemn covenant and promise, and this promise confirmed by visible seals, and these seals, most significant, both to the spiritual and bodily eye. And *Lastly*, As to the death threatened, even taken in its greatest extent, the supposed offence being infinite, reason can never possibly make any solid objection, against the penalty of this covenant, expressed thereby.

I know the great objection, insisted upon by carnal reason against this covenant, is ; *First*, That Adam was constituted by God the common moral head and Representative of all his posterity : And this done without their choice and consent, though equally concerned in the said covenant, with himself

himself. And *Secondly*, That upon his personal transgression, all his posterity are reckoned equally guilty with himself; and are actually punished from the very womb, for the said sin; they being born with the seeds of natural death, and under the absolute power of spiritual, and liable unto eternal; all which to carnal reason, seems to be not only inconsistent, with the divine goodness, but plainly contrary to moral justice and equity: Which (as is reasoned) can never allow the punishing of the innocent for the guilty; nor make a covenant prove binding upon any party never asked about, nor consenting unto the same. For clearing of which, and,

To remove all these prejudices; suppose there were no more to be said, but its being the proposal and deed of a God infinite in wisdom, holiness and goodness; it is certain, there can be nothing unreasonable or unjust in it. For either reason and equity must be imperfections and not perfections, or else it is impossible for a deity infinite in all moral perfections, to act in the least contrary to any one of them: Otherwise the very divine nature must change and become *fallible*. And that the constituting of Adam a public person and Representative of all his posterity, was in very deed matter of fact, upon the deity's part is undeniable from the evident visible tokens of sin and misery with which all mankind are born. But I know this reasoning, however solid and unanswerable, yet will not satisfy a great many, without they be more particularly discoursed and answered in this matter; as what they shall just now be. Yet withal in the mean time, considering the foresaid argument, is unanswerable by reason, I cannot forbear, to make this native inference from it, to wit,

That any remaining objections against God's making

making Adam the Representative and common moral head of his posterity in the first covenant; and thereupon treating his offspring according to his behaviour therein; must certainly not be solid pleadings and reasonings, founded upon true and right reason, which can never contradict it self, but must only be some doubts and mistakes, arising from ignorance, or the want of due and deep thought, in this most equal transaction.

But now more particularly, for the satisfaction of disputants upon this head, let us consider, *First*, That Adam had as great inherent perfection of grace, and ability thereupon, to keep covenant, as any of all his posterity, could ever be supposed to have: And that therefore, this covenant being made with him, as their head, could be no ways prejudicial unto them. None of his posterity being abler to keep it than himself. Had God indeed chosen out some unfit and weak person among mankind, for this great trust, there would have been some shew for reason to have reclaimed; whereas now there is none. *Secondly*, Seeing reason is appealed unto in this matter, it is undeniable, but that God's accepting *one man*, his obedience in the name and room of the obedience of the whole race, was very great condescension upon God's part; who might have obliged every individual man, to a personal perfect obedience, in order to his own everlasting life, whereas accepting the obedience of One in the room of All; reason must say, look'd (so far) rather like a covenant of grace, than of works: and that instead of any unjust severity being expressed therein, behold love and grace, had rather so much the ascendant: that there only intervened but the obedience of one man (for the glory of the divine holiness) to keep it from being altogether and absolutely a covenant of grace.

Again, *Thirdly*, Let it be considered, that the keeping

keeping of this covenant, was as much Adam's own personal interest, as any of his posterity; yea it was more, because hereby great honour would have accrued unto him by being first the common natural parent of all mankind: And then, *2dly*, Their glorious moral head, in the covenant God made with man; And then *3dly*, In being under God, the great instrumental conveyer of everlasting life unto all his posterity.

Moreover, *4thly*, Let us consider, that seeing the whole posterity, was as really to have received the promised reward, upon Adam's obedience, (for the deity cannot be disingenuous) as what now they are punished for his disobedience; which of them all, can then with any shew of reason, say, that they are in the least wronged. Again *5thly*, Upon supposition, that all mankind, had been present in the garden, and God had proposed the acceptance of the obedience of any one, they themselves should choose for their Representative, in the name and room of the whole; and withal had promised that upon the perfect obedience of that one, all the whole human race, in due time should be eternally confirmed in perfect holiness and happiness: I say, upon this supposition, behoved not all mankind to have acknowledged great grace to have been in the foresaid proposal? More especially, seeing the obedience of one person (absolutely considered) is undeniably a thousand times more easy, than the obedience of millions.

And as to the choice of the person considering *first*, Adam to have been the natural head and parent of all: And *Secondly*, To have been as perfectly qualified for performing the required condition, as any of mankind; And withal *Thirdly*, That he was as deeply interested for the sake of his own happiness, (not to speak of his reputation and honour) to endeavour perfect obedience, as
what

what any of his posterity was : Who of all his race after these considerations, without a blush, would or could have denied him their vote, to become their moral head in the first covenant : Yea more, would they not have pressed his acceptance thereof for their sakes, considering such reasonable, condescending and easy terms. But now if after all these things ;

It should still be urged, that the posterity being unborn, were neither acquainted with the transaction, nor yet consented unto it. The answer can not but be obvious and plain ; it being evident from the premisses, that upon supposition all mankind had been there : An universal unanimous consent (*nemine contradicente*) could not possibly have failed. So that the true state of the question or controversy, is not, whether we were present, acquainted with and consented unto this transaction ? But whether the nature of the transaction and covenant, taken complexly was such, as no man, even in so far as rational, or consulting his own interest could possibly have refused ? So that abstract from the rational dependent creatures, absolute subjection, unto the whole proposals of a sovereign holy deity ; even reason, discretion and interest pleaded strongly for consent in this matter, and therefore seeing you and I, and all the world could not but have actually and cordially consented, had we been present, and consequently by our own consent, are now equally laible to the threatening and promise ; according to the behaviour of our head ; Why then shall there be the least murmuring in heart or tongue against the All-wise sovereign, God's making the same choice and terms. to which infallibly (it present) we would have said, *Amen* ? But vain man will be wise. Job 11 12. We needs teach, not only perfect Adam, but the infallible deity also.

But

But if reason would allow due thought upon this great subject, there is a depth of divine wisdom, in the model of this first covenant, which thousands, who obstinately argue and murmur against it, seem not till this day, to have allowed one serious reflection upon.

And that is ; God well foreknew, that both the holy and the apostate angels ; those intelligent and intuitive spirits ; the one from love, and the other from enmity, would seriously pry and look into the whole of the divine procedure ; even the least turning and winding therein, and that whether towards the angelical or human race : And particularly, that Satan would search to the uttermost (but in vain) if possibly the least flaw or failure could be found out, in any part of the divine dispensations, *John* 14. 30. And therefore in the depth of wisdom, to prevent so much as the least shadow of unrighteousness or partiality with the deity, in punishing of sin, differently in angels and men, behold matters are so ordered in this first covenant, in view of the second : That if it be objected, that God passed by man, punishing his sin in the person of a surety and redeemer, and not in their own persons, as what he did, with respect to the sinning angels : Behold the answer is at hand, to wit, That man originally, sinned not after the manner of the angels, of whom every individual were not only morally (as the elect were in Adam) but physically present at the commission of the transgression : So that they not only knew of the rebellion, but personally and actually consented ; and most presumptuously with a high hand, perpetrated the same : Whereas the unborn posterity of Adam, were only morally present at his rebellion.

All which doth not in the least derogate, from the greatness and freedom of the divine love and mercy

mercy in Christ to the elect, as if their sinning in Adam (and not as the angels) had any ways merited mercy at God's hand: For as Adam's sin, was great and really theirs, so also behold what millions of actual transgressions do they superadd to the same? Only I say, and cannot but remark it, that this contrived manner of man's sinning to wit, in one common head, by the Lord's constituting Adam a public person; It, wonderfully, (to the glory of the divine wisdom) rendered the clemency or gracious allowance in transmitting the punishment of the elect their sin upon Christ, (while the apostate angels personally bear their own) a most congruous performance, to all the perfections of the deity. In fine, matters were so wisely and equally adjusted, that when the prince of this world came, *John* 14 30. to make the strict enquiry, into the whole divine procedure in this matter; and our redeemer's deportment thereupon, he found nothing.

And therefore reader, as one who may come to be interested in the righteousness of the second Adam; as what thou art now in the guilt of the first, I cannot but beseech thee, to remember that (while the fallen angels are blaspheming, because of their hopeless and desperate condition) it is certainly thy great duty to stop, and with the greatest affection and admiration to cry out, *Rom.* xi. 33. *O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God: How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out? Yea further, how deeply obliged is man, more seriously to ponder and admire, that wonderful parallel designed from eternity, and founded by the model of this covenant, betwixt the first and second Adam; the one as the common head of all mankind, in the covenant of works, and the other as the head of all the elect in the covenant of grace; as is at large*

large declared, by the great apostle, *Rom. v. 12.* to the end. But above all the parts of that context, let us fix our thoughts particularly upon the words of the 17th *ver.* as principally relative to the present purpose.—*For if by one man's offence death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ. q. d.* If one offence by one man Adam made all his posterity guilty how much more shall the manifold acts of Christ's perfect obedience, imputed unto the elect, make them truly righteous. From all which,

A twofold inference, cannot but become most obvious : As first, That the fallen angels, who all actually sinned as being all present at the contrivance; and consenting unto the conspiracy, and actors in the rebellion, have no ground to reclaim against the deity, for his proceeding differently with them, from what he hath done with respect unto fallen man ; considering that they only sinned at first in their representative, and thereupon derived from him, the corruption of their nature. More especially, The deity having it further to reply unto those atrocious and presumptuous rebels, that man sinned not absolutely of himself without any manner of temptation, as what the apostate angels did, but was most subtilly addressed, importuned and deceived by the old Serpent, in his transgression ; So that speak who will against God's dealing gently with man, it becomes not him.

Again the *second* inference from the premisses is no less clear, to wit, The great accountableness of the doctrine of believing sinners their justification through the righteousness of another, even of our Lord Jesus Christ For,

Three things are now here most plain : First, that the elect at first only sinned in Adam, and have by

reason of that sin, derived the corruption of their nature from him. *2dly*, That the Son of God, having become truly man, and in the human nature having both undergone the curse of the broken law, and having also fulfilled perfectly the precepts thereof; and all this done in obedience to God's commands. and in elect sinners *Law-place* and *Room*; It is thereupon, certainly most evident, (considering the dignity of the person thus obeying and suffering) that the divine honour, is fully as much exalted and repaired by this perfect active and passive obedience of the second Adam's, as the head of the elect; as what God was dishonoured by the sin and offence of the first Adam. Briefly, All must own, that had the first Adam perfectly obeyed the law of God: The divine honour and glory, would in that case have been preserved safe and intire; in bringing him and all his posterity unto life; And therefore, on the other hand, it is equally undeniable, that if the obedience of a finite creature, would thus have perfectly honoured, glorified and pleased the deity, that then certainly, the perfect obedience of an infinite person *God-man*, the only begotten and well beloved Son of God, could not but much more effectually accomplish and bring about that high and noble design and end. Especially considering how *illustriously*, the passive and active obedience of such an extraordinary and glorious person (as what our Lord was) did publicly before God, angels and men, display the glory of all those divine perfections and excellencies which the elects sin had obscured and contemned. And hence it was, that our Lord could own unto his father, and that even before his bloody sufferings, in prospect of his finishing the whole of his obedience — *That he had glorified him on earth*: Yea, and is so positive and bold in this his assertion, that he

He thereupon pleads confidently, that the father would next highly glorify him, *John xvii. 4, 5.* Upon all which,

Thirdly, If the divine honour and glory be adequately and fully repaired, Then certainly *Justice*, must be fully satisfied : Neither can it indeed be otherwise ; for the law, being the rule of justice, demands ; and again this law being perfectly fulfilled, and that both in its curse, and in its precepts, justice must thereupon have certainly received compleat satisfaction. And justice being perfectly satisfied by the obedience of Christ there can remain no solid objection or difficulty in our justification by his righteousness.

And therefore we may here clearly see a full and satisfactory answer, unto the grand objection of *Socinians* and *Bourignonists*, who make so much noise against our Lord's satisfaction, in the elects name and room.

Asserting first, That considering the nature of justice, which is to render to every man, according to the nature and demerit of his own works, and not according to the nature and demerit of the works of another : That therefore, it is impossible for justice to be satisfied by the active and passive obedience of our Lord, in sinners room ; they being the persons truly guilty, and he absolutely innocent.

In answer to which, let us but seriously and impartially consider the model of the first covenant, by which the first Adam was constituted the common moral head of all his posterity ; and all difficulty in this matter shall presently vanish : For, hence,

First, If it be objected as to our Lord's active obedience, That it not being the personal obedience of the elect, that therefore justice can have no manner of regard unto it in favour of them :

It is answered, that nothing can be more evident than, if the perfect obedience of the first Adam, a meer finite creature, was to have been accepted in the stead and room of all his posterity, (*salvo Justitiæ Jure*) the divine justice consenting thereunto, That then certainly much more, may it consent unto the acceptance of the obedience of the glorious second Adam, who is none less than God-man, in the name and room of a chosen and beloved part of mankind. And as for the constitution of Christ in the elects room, considering that He became truly man assuming our nature, and that after its fall, it is impossible to reason to refuse, but that both our Lord on the one hand had as really an interest in mankind to act and do for them, as what Adam had; And that also on the other hand, God had as much of right and power to constitute our Lord the person God-man, He himself consenting unto the same.) the head and Representative of the unborn and absent elect, in the covenant of grace, as what he had to constitute the first Adam the moral head and Representative of all mankind in the covenant of works.

Again *secondly*, If it be objected, That justice can never at least allow the passive obedience of Christ, in the law-place and room of the guilty elect: His sufferings being no personal punishment of their sin, and consequently no true satisfaction unto justice.

It is answered, That the elect were as really present, in Christ's sufferings, by virtue of the covenant of redemption and grace, as what they were in their sinning in Adam; by virtue of the covenant of works. Accordingly we find the apostle including them as positively and explicitly in the obedience of Christ, as what he speaks of them, in relation to their disobedience in Adam, *Rom. v. 19. For as by one man's disobedience, many were made*

made sinners : So by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. And therefore seeing there presence and interest in suffering by the second Adam, bears full proportion unto their sinning in the first Adam, by whose offence they were made sinners ; It is impossible but justice should have most fair access to proceed unto the acceptance of Christ's passive obedience, in their name and room, and consequently unto their justification, upon the account of his perfect and compleat righteousness : And finally, if there were two of our first parents who sinned and should have obeyed : Behold the glorious, Redeemers, suffering and obeying, as He was the man Christ Jesus, so He also truly is the seed of the woman : and consequently interested in both. Unsearchable wisdom ! And therefore no wonder, if the apostle so much insisted upon and improved this great parrallel betwixt the first and second Adam : *Rom. v. 12. to the end ;* In his explication of that great and glorious gospel doctrine, of justification ; as is to be seen by any who will seriously and without prejudice ponder the same.

And therefore upon the whole of the premisses : we may now easily have a most clear, scriptural and rational account of the doctrine of justification : For behold first, we cannot but see our Lord's deep interest and concern in human nature : And that both upon his compact with the father from eternity, and also from his incarnation in time : so that if Adam, as the first partaker of the human nature, and natural head of all mankind, was thereupon found capable of transacting and obeying for the whole ; it is undeniable, but our Lord the far more glorious person and man of the two, was much more capable of representing, transacting and obeying for the elect. Briefly, if the Father of the family may transact and obey for the whole :

Then certainly the elder brother (especially if infinitely more glorious in person and performances than the Father) may much more represent and obey for some few of his brethren, *Heb. ii. 16. 17.*

Again secondly, Let us behold how exactly, the obedience of our Lord, is perfectly adjusted unto the condition of fallen man. For 1. The law being broken, and justice thereupon requiring the infliction of the curse; behold accordingly our Lord in his passive obedience, is made a curse for the elect, (*Gal. 3. 13.*) enduring the wrath due unto all their sins: And thus all their iniquities being laid upon him; they by his stripes come to be healed, *Isai. 53. 5, 6.* So that by this passive obedience of our Lord's in the elects room, it is evident, they cannot but in justice be freed from the curse of the law, and escape the wrath which is to come, *Rom. v. 8, 9.*

And again, 2dly, Whereas man stood obliged unto a perfect active obedience and righteousness, in order unto his obtaining everlasting life: Behold accordingly, our Lord perfectly obeyed the law, and so filled all righteousness, whereby his elect come to be accounted and accepted in their persons and performances, as perfectly righteous in the sight of God, upon which they are entitled unto eternal life and all the blessings necessary, towards the perfecting the same. All which the Apostle Paul plainly declareth, *Rom. v. 19. For as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners: So by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.* And so also the Apostle Peter, first epistle chap. 1. 2. particularly sheweth, That the redeemed are elected by God unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: intimating thereby the two great branches of the meritorious and procuring cause of all the great blessings designed by electing love for them.

Moreover,

Moreover. it can never be supposed, but that the man Christ Jesus, instantly upon the union of the human nature, in the person of the Son of God, had an undoubted right and claim unto eternal life and glory. And that without any intervening course of holy obedience, as the meritorious and procuring cause thereof: For our Lord, as the eternal Son of God, having an essential claim unto all blessedness and glory; it is impossible, but that *ipso Facto*, upon the human nature, its being assumed into a personal union, with the Son of God; The wonderful and glorious person God-man, must necessarily thereupon, from the very first minute of the hypostatical union, have an undoubted immediate and unalterable claim and title unto everlasting life, and glory. And therefore it remains, That his perfect active obedience, in its great merit and product, must redound unto the rendering of his elect people perfectly righteous in the sight of God, and thereupon entitling them unto eternal life. And thus as *sin reigned unto death*, so *Grace reigned through righteousness, unto eternal life*, by *Jesus Christ our Lord*, Rom. vi. 21. Importing that as sin overcame the first Adam even unto death, and that notwithstanding of his great perfection of grace: So now let us behold a second Adam given unto the elect world by free love; who by a far greater, inconceivable, and infallible perfection of grace, hath begun and finished a perfect obedience and righteousness, for them, whereby sin and death are both overcome, and they triumphantly brought unto everlasting life.

And thus an all-wise and gracious God hath wonderfully provided for all the parts of the great salvation: That so his people might not only with Absalom be delivered from death, and have their fault forgiven: But might also have access to see the King, and enjoy the light of his countenance.

2 Sam. xiv. 24, 32. It is true, That by our Lord's passive obedience, the elect may be supposed, and considered as restored in *statu quo prius*, being as it were *Adam* restored to innocence again; The guilt of his sin being purged away, by our Lord's enduring the curse. But withal, it would also be remembred, That innocent *Adam*, was not instantly to enter heaven, or have the final assurance of everlasting life, until by some proper course of actual obedience, he had glorified God: And therefore, the necessity of our Lord's active obedience, as well as his passive, cannot but clearly appear, and that in order unto his compleating, in favour of his people, the whole parts of their salvation.

But now after all that hath been said, if any scruples in relation to this point, yet remain with some, and then let all such consider, That both the glory of the divine wisdom and the immutability of the divine councils, required, no less, than both our Lord's active and passive, obedience, in the matter of compleating his peoples salvation. For, Satan that old subtile Serpent, having deceived and ensnared man, supposed, That now certainly he had accomplished these two grand designs, to wit, *First*, That he had disappointed the deity of the glory of human obedience, and thereby mocked the design of creation: And *2dly* That he had also irrecoverably destroyed man making him equally miserable with himself, and withal further, probably, thereupon greatly pleased himself, arguing, That now the deity, could not possibly save man without a threefold gross absurdity, inconsistent with his glorious perfections.

As *First*, That he could not do it without falsifying his threatning of death against sinning man. Nor *2dly*. Without infringing upon the connection betwixt perfect human obedience and eternal life

life ; seeing man had now sinned. And then *3dly*. That he could not spare man, without an evident partiality and injustice in his procedure towards men, in respect of what the divine procedure was with sinning angels. And thus the proud enemy, stood as it were in the garden, boasting and triumphing both over the deity, in heaven and over man whom he had made, to bear his image and to exalt his glory upon earth.

But behold of a sudden, the great depth of infinite wisdom breaks out, and a glorious redeemer is found at hand, who being truly man, *First*, undergoeth the curse in the room of all escaping the same ; So that the divine truth and faithfulness in the threatening is preserved intire : And *2dly*, perfectly obeyeth the law, whereby a perfect righteousness is provided, in order to the elects obtaining eternal life, so that the eternal connection betwixt perfect righteousness and eternal life (so well becoming the essential holiness & righteousness of the deity) is not infringed upon ; And yet man is saved. And then *3dly*, Considering the foresaid passive and active obedience of the second *Adam*, in the name and room of the elect, who sinned in the first, there is not the least ground left, for impeaching the deity of partiality and injustice, in his different procedure with the sinning angels, from that observed by him, in relation to elect men.

So that, upon the whole it may be seen, That the glory both of the divine wisdom, holiness and righteousness, and also the immutability of the divine enacted and settled method, for man's obtaining life ; to wit, in a way of perfect obedience and righteousness ; required our Lord's active abedience, as well as passive, to concur in the procurement of his elect people's salvation. And thus, what the law could not do, through the weakness of the flesh, meaning our original sin and the corruption

ruption of our nature, which hindereth our perfect obedience) our Lord was sent both to be condemned for sin, undergoing the curse of the broken law; and also to obey the precepts thereof, that so the righteousness of the law, might be fulfilled in us, *Rom. viii. 3. 4.*

And if the malicious and subtile old serpent, should still reply, That at least *Adam* and *Eve* themselves; who sinned actually, personally and willfully, should have been treated like unto himself; It is answered, That were that inveterate enemy, capable of shame or blushing; it were impossible for him to reflect upon his base and ungenerous subtilty in the garden, attacking the woman, in her husband's absence, together with her repulse of him, notwithstanding of the same: Or again to call to mind his gross lies and dissimulation, together with his positive and peremptory assertions, and setting all home, with the greatest importunity, and pretence of kindness and friendship imaginable: And then finally, in the issue deceiving the man by the means of the woman. I say, were he capable of unprejudiced, impartial and sober reflection upon all these; it were simply impossible for him, but in heart to cry out, *Amen* unto God's making our first parents, two glorious eternal monuments, of the riches and power of his grace and mercy, through the Lord Jesus Christ.

All the difficulty then, that remains now, is only the removing the objection, which the premisses seem to make against God's proceeding unto the condemnation, of any of the children of men, seeing they all at first only sinned in *Adam*, as what theekest did a so.

Towards clearing of which, let us consider, That nothing contained in the premisses, can any ways give ground in the least to impeach the procedure of justice, in punishing eternally and condignly others of mankind, who at first sinned only in *Adam* as the elect did. In regard 1. The covenant in its terms (as hath been already, fully cleared)

ed) were so just and equal: The demand of perfect obedience being Adam's and his whole posterity's indispensable duty, by the law of creation, yea and that previous to any other bond or obligation by virtue of the covenant upon them: So that it was in no man's power present or absent, without the height of injustice and monstrous ingratitude, to have denied consent unto the aforesaid demand. 2dly. Seeing the condition required, was so just in its own nature, that without any formal proposal of it by God, it was indispensably necessary upon man, how much more then, became it his duty, when a sovereign God formally proposed it, by way of covenant to Adam, as the moral head of all his posterity; offering to accept his obedience in the room of all; I say, how much more by this, did the covenant become most binding upon the whole of mankind?

So that unless we make man an uncreated, Independent being, not owing perfect obedience unto the deity; we must allow, that the consent of the whole of mankind, (by God's constituting Adam a public person) was not only morally and virtually given, by Adam's consent as their head, but that further (in point of indispensable obligation and duty) it was necessarily and actually given, as if every individual among men had been there present. Upon all which 3dly, There can remain, no further ground of quarrelling with the imputation of Adams sin, in its guilt and punishment, unto all his posterity, *Rom. v. 12.* Briefly, The breach of a lawful transaction, though affecting the posterity (which were not present at the making of the same) stops not legal execution of the foresaid transgression, according to the nature of its terms, all the world over.

And therefore whatever depth of wisdom was in God's constituting the first Adam the moral head of all his posterity, towards paving the way for his acceptance of the second Adam, and his obedience,

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in the elect's name and room, who at first only sinned in the first Adam : Yet it would still be accurately noticed, That it was not their sinning only after that manner ; (to wit, not personally, but in their representative) that any ways merited or procured Christ's being made their second Adam, or the imputation of his righteousness unto them : This being intirely owing unto sovereign and free grace, which was pleased to choose them, and give them unto Christ, to be saved by him : who otherwise, if considered in themselves : as part of fallen mankind, deserveth wrath equally with the reprobate, whom a sovereign God passed by ; leaving them in their sin and misery. And therefore,

In fine, however the model of the first covenant made way for our Lord's passive and active obedience, becoming more conspicuously and illustriously a satisfaction unto justice, in the elects name and room ; yet at the same time this very satisfaction being made for the elect, clearly demonstrates, their being most justly liable unto the curse and penalty of the broken covenant : And that notwithstanding of their sinning at first only in Adam, And therefore, if they were thus liable unto punishment, notwithstanding of the foresaid consideration ; it must undeniably also be acknowledged, that the reprobate who sinned in Adam along with them, must be so too.

But further, there being none (living under the gospel, and capable of the means of grace) actually condemned by God, but either unbelieving or impenitent sinners : Who can say that God is unrighteous ? Reason it self condemneth all wilful despisers of the physician and remedy. And as for others that never heard of the remedy, the righteous judge of all the earth, will never punish them for its contempt : But consider them as having lived only under the moon light of nature and
deal

deal with them accordingly : so that they shall never receive one stripe for despising the blood of the covenant, *Rom. ii. 12.*

And as for such who die in their infancy, or younger years, coming, as it were, straight from the lions of the first Adam. unto the Judgment Seat of the second : Who ever was, at the tribunal to give account of the divine procedure with them ? so as to give ground for any harsh impressions of the deity in this matter. It is indeed true, that considering the poison of natural enmity ingrained in them, none can refuse, but the *Cockatrice* deserveth to be destroyed even in the Egg ; *Rom. ix. 11.* And it must also be owned, that considering the original stock was once planted by God a noble vine, fit for producing noble and generous branches ; If this stock have voluntarily degenerate into a cursed briar and thorn ; that none indeed, in that case, can prove any obligation to lye upon a provoked deity, to set Almighty power and grace on work, to create and renew the degenerate stock a second time.

But withal, as true it is on the other hand, that considering how very early and freely God did forgive our first parents their great transgression, the grand procuring cause of our sinfulness and misery, *Gen. iii. 15.* And considering the gracious promises made to believers and their seed. *Deut. 30. vi. Acts ii 39.* All professing parents, upon their sincere covenanting with God, for themselves and for their children, and upon their acquainting them early with their creator, and with the gracious redeemer : I say, in that case, if the Lord call for them by death, in their younger years ; parents have it comfortably to remember, that their judge is one, who shewed great bowels and compassions of old towards little children, laying his hands upon them, and blessing them and commanding
they

they should be suffered to come unto him, *Luke*
18 16.

If carnal proud reason, as its last and utmost objection, shall still urge against the tenor of this first covenant whereby Adam's posterity comes to be punished for his sin, that the souls of our children, are not from the parents but from God himself, and thereupon interrogate, whence it is, that they are corrupted? It is answered, that as the soul is immediately created by God, it is no ways corrupted, but a spiritual substance, having all the natural powers and faculties of a reasonable soul: But upon its union with the body, (which constituteth one of guilty Adam's posterity) the branch cometh instantly to be invenomed by the cursed poison of the stock: The Lord most justly denying spiritual life: Spiritual death is thereupon judicially introduced. For, the human soul being a rational moral being, loving or hating some object or other, as the greatest good and greatest evil; it is evident, that upon its being deprived by the fall, of its original knowledge, righteousness, and holiness: The mind will and affections, could not but thereupon be affected with darkness, enmity and disorder, which constituteth spiritual death.

But if any continue curiously to urge, That the manner of conveyance of original inherent corruption should be demonstrated: It is only desired of such, That they explain the particular manner, how the old Serpent at first poisoned the noble stock; and then, it shall easily be declared, how it is conveyed to the branches. It may therefore justly satisfy, That Adam's first great transgression, by which he destroyed and murdered spiritual life in himself; as the moral head of all his posterity; is justly punished with spiritual death, on all his off-spring. Briefly, Since Adam denied and cast off God for his Lord, no wonder if God took
down

down his image from his soul : And since Adam took on with Satan, allowing him God's throne, no wonder, if by way of disgrace and punishment upon man, the diabolical image be set up in its room, *Rom* i. 29. In fine, Adam transgressed in a public character, and undoubtedly knew so much himself ; as knowing he was the only living head and stock of the whole kind : Besides, the covenant had been dark and ambiguous, had he been kept ignorant by God of the great extent of the same. And therefore solid reason can never object against the punishment, its running parallel, with the known extent of the voluntary grand transgression.

These things being over ; lest we forget the scope of the present discourse, to wit, The declaring the remarkable events in time, by which the eternal plan, relative to men, comes to be accomplished, : Let us return, and accurately observe how God's transacting, thus in the first covenant, with Adam, as the moral head of his posterity, made way, and that in a very formal and solemn manner, for accomplishing these three or four great designs. As *1st*. For man's obedience being put to the tryal, Whether he would keep covenant with God or not. *2dly*. For the display of the mutability and fallibility even of perfect Adam, with all his great stock of inherent grace. Upon which, *3dly*. The glorious second Adam, must be in readiness to descend into the garden, with a new and far more, all-sufficient stock ; rendering the second covenant more firm and everlasting : More especially, the naked trembling condition of the first under the poor shadow of the narrow leaves, *Gen*. 3. 8. Calling aloud upon the second quickly to proclaim, the intimation of the hidden mystery, *v*. 15. By all which *4thly*. Fair access was presently given, for the display and execution of the eternal distinguishing decree relative to men : So that electing

ting love must now speak plainly : Abel and Jacob, must now be known, called, justified and sanctified, otherwise they shall infallibly perish, equally with Cain and Esau ; for all have sinned, and death hath past upon all men. And thus in a little time, the eternal plan, was very far advanced. All which leads us natively to the consideration of the breach of the covenant of works as the next remarkable event in time, towards a further accomplishment of the same.

CHAPTER X.

Adam's Breach of the aforesaid covenant ; as the fourth remarkable event in time, for bringing about the eternal plan, is next considered. This event most strange in itself, upon several accounts. And yet great wisdom in the Divine permission thereof. Satan's temptation most insinuating in its own nature ; and managed with no less subtilty. The gradual sinful compliance of our first parents. The deity having allowed man a sufficiency of grace (if improved) for standing, and never having been addressed for confirmation ; yea nor so much as once consulted in the temptation ; man can never justly charge God with his sin or fall. The eternal divine distinguishing decree of predestination, being absolutely a secret to the human mind, could not possibly affect or influence the human will. While satan is triumphing ; the divine wisdom mocketh both him and sin, in extracting the greatest glory to the deity, and good to his chosen people, out of so dark and gloomy a dispensation, as what man's fall was. However small the matter of Adam's first sin, may seem to be in itself ; yet when formally and fully

fully considered, it is undeniably a most heinous and provoking transgression. This grand offence introduceth sin and death upon all mankind: The rational account of its so doing. A particular rational account of the import of spiritual death, and of the manner of its introduction into the several powers of the soul. Man having absolutely lost all spiritual life, in the fall, the Arminian doctrine of the power of free-will, must be unaccountable. A five fold argument, proving and confirming the absolute loss of all spiritual life in man by the fall. Let therefore man naturally pretend to no higher acts, than what bear proportion, to the vegetive, animal, or merely rational life and capacities. Death eternal the just demerit of man's sin. Seeing finite man cannot at once bear the infinite weight of wrath, due unto the infinite offence in sin; the wrath inflicted cannot but prove infinite in point of duration. The breach of the first covenant, greatly paves the way for the accomplishment of the several decrees in the eternal plan, relative to the glory of justice and mercy among men.

THE fourth remarkable event in time, bringing about the eternal divine contrivance, was Adam's breach of the covenant, which God had made with him. With respect to which event, it must indeed be acknowledged, that,

It may be justly surprising, to hear of the breach, but especially so sudden, of such a reasonable and advantageous transaction, as what the first covenant was. But yet whoever will seriously ponder the matter a little, shall presently see, that the wheels of providence, in their quick motion in this event, were all full of eyes. To clear which, let us remember, 1. That man upon the most weighty grounds

grounds (as hath been already cleared) was created mutable, and that confirming grace (upon equal reasons) was not the allowance of his first and natural state; but wisely reserved for his second and supernatural one: That so, God and the lamb, and not meer man, might have the praise and song of salvation through eternity, *Rev. 7. 10.*

Again *2dly.* Let us next consider, that the divine redeeming love in Christ, as tending far more to the glory of the deity, than creating love; and now most pregnant in the divine breast, and having waited from eternity for this day, was now become exceeding pressing to break forth, *Prov. 8. 31.* For the divine love being the most perfect of all others, it must certainly be the most ardent and vehement; and therefore its beloved object upon the human creation, being seen by it, it thereupon became (as it were) impatient to display itself. Upon all which, *3dly.* This active spirit of love, moving the wheels; providence could make no long delay. Yet still after all, the whole progress of this great project, must be so ordered, as that wisdom and holiness may clearly appear, and shine forth, in the whole steps and motions thereof, mutually embracing one another.

Accordingly let us consider, the old serpent of a sudden, is found in the garden: For having been banished heaven, and ranged the air, and having found no prey, he comes at last to the earth, where finding man, bearing the image of God, and possessing a whole lower world, as his own: He is thereupon enraged with the sight, and falls a reasoning to this purpose; as his subsequent attempt confirmeth and maketh evident.

Here is a noble rational being, promising by obedience to repair to the deity, the glory lost by my rebellion, and thereby to make the lower world pay the tribute of any that is wanting in the
higher;

higher: Which discovery; incensed enmity could not digest. Again here is an inferior being to myself at best, rational dust, enjoying the greatest of blessings; the divine image, favour and fellowship; a whole world to himself, made lord of all, and yet at the same time, the younger brother; whose dust I saw taken out of the earth: All which, no doubt, enflamed envy to the greatest degree imaginable. Again we have no less ground to suppose, this wise spirit, proceeding and reasoning yet further with himself, that however perfect man is now, yet once I was more, and therefore I having fallen, it is possible, yea highly probable, that he may do so too. By all which, being encouraged, he goes on to the contrivance of a suitable temptation, adjusted to the rational nature: In finding out of which, his own experience dictated unto him, that a promise of increase of knowledge, and thereby of becoming more perfect and independent like God, was the greatest motives the human mind and will, could possibly be presented with.

Accordingly without delay, he forms the temptation, and to render it the more efficacious, he most subtilly croucheth down, incorporating himself with the serpent, that so by seeming a contemptible speaker, he might neither affright, nor be much suspected by the woman. Upon which 2dly, he addresseth himself to *Eve*, in her husband's absence, that so she might no ways correspond with him, in order to her direction or confirmation; and that *Adam*, seeing her to have eaten, and yet death not immediately inflicted, might with the less fear venture to eat himself, and then 3dly, to take off all fear, from the threatening, behold he gives it a most cunning turn, *Gen. iii. 1. For hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the Garden.*

As if the old serpent had said, by the very
P a threatening,

threatning, you may clearly see, that God knows well the wonderful virtue of that fruit, above all others in the garden, and therefore is only afraid of your eating of it, and so becoming like unto himself; Great in knowledge, more independent and immortal. And therefore believe it, he hath only terrified you with the fear of death; Not that it ever shall be the issue of your eating. Its also most observable, that he insists much upon knowledge, as considering that man, seeing Heaven above him, and himself below, might the more easily believe, that a great many objects were as yet mysterious unto him, and that a great many new discoveries might be added unto any measure of original knowledge, which he as yet enjoyed. Upon all which, *4thly*, To make all the more powerful, behold he placeth himself near to the tree of knowledge, that so while he addressed the ear, the beautiful fruit, might at the same time affect and engage the eye, and so both work together upon the imagination, as is evident from the woman's looking so affectionately upon it, *Gen. iii. 6*. At the same time, while the serpent was conferring with her.

Matters being thus now prepared, and man at the time absolutely ignorant of any such enemy as satan, and withal, no doubt much surprised with an address from a reasonable brutish creature, answering all his objections, and pleading and urging so sensibly the temptation: Behold mutable and fallible man, inadvertently opens the ear unto the disguised tempter, and unwatchfully fixeth the eye upon the forbidden fruit: which senses conveying lively ideas into the imagination, and these again influencing the understanding; Which being now most intent on the great increase of knowledge, and being absolutely void of all experience of fulfilled threatnings; gradually fell into the sinful

fisful extream of doubting the truth of the divine threatening *Gen. iii. 3.* Upon which the terror and awe of the threatening being once broken, behold the solemn and bold assertion of the unsuspected serpent, assuring them they should become as Gods; ensnared the will; determining at length to comply.

Upon all which the hand pulleth the fruit, which being once pulled, and the transgression thereby openly begun (The fruit can now only do harm, till it be eaten;) Upon which the woman proceedeth to eat, and no visible death immediately ensuing thereupon: Behold *Adam's* stronger understanding and will is also deceived and ensnared with the same temptation; He no ways (for the time) suspecting that, the affectionate rib, made to be a help meet for him, would wound him more, than what the want of it did before. And thus in the depth of wisdom, the enmity of satan and mutability of man, opened a door for the far more glorious dispensation of *God in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, 2 Cor. v. 19* And therefore,

That there was a special, wise and holy divine hand, in this extraordinary and important event of man's fall, is beyond all controversy: More especially considering the deep concern, the eternal covenant of grace, had in the breach of this of works. Satan it is true, was in the garden, but so was God also: Satan acting the part of a desperate enemy to God and man; God on the other hand permitting, over-ruling and therein consulting his own greater glory, and man's greater good. The devil moved some wheels for the disappointing the deity in his ends of the human creation; But behold, God upon the contrary influenced others, within them, for baffling of him, in the supposed consequences of his grand temptation. The old serpent,

serpent thought, by the means of the woman, he had undone all, for ever, to all intents and purposes, whereas behold the woman by her seed, is to bruise his head, and restore all, according to the eternal plan.

And as to man's part in the fall, God indeed made the soul and ear that conversed with the serpent : As also the eye, hand and mouth, that looked upon, pulled and eat the forbidden fruit : And he also sustained them all in their natural powers, in those actions : But as to the least of iniquitous compliance, of either the inward or outward man ; Who is it that dare, or can so much as shew or alledge the least ground, of the deity, his being actively concerned therein ? for abstract from his omniscient and omnipresent eye, which could not be absent, he was not so much as in the least acquainted by man, with the conference betwixt the serpent and him ; And consequently much less addressed or consulted for advice or confirming grace therein.

But rather upon the contrary, man 1. Most inadvertently opened the ear. yea treated with the tempter, and that in a matter directly and evidently contrary unto an express divine prohibition. 2dly. Yea and this he did in the face of conscience, which brought to his remembrance at the hour of temptation (*Gen. iii. 3*) both the divine prohibition, and the hazard of the threatening : Notwithstanding of all which, let us behold with astonishment, the great sun-light of his mind, giving way unto the small cloud of satan's insinuation, instead of dispelling it presently (as it ought) with its beams ; I mean, behold man entertaining a doubt about the certainty of the divine threatening, and that upon the bare assertion of an apparent brutish creature. Again 3dly. Let us also behold his will suddenly complying, and that even after reasoning

reasoning in the mind, - yea more, even after hearing the serpent, give God flatly and avowedly the lie : Which might have presently given the alarm, and fully convinced man, that surely some secret traitor and enemy was at the bottom : And so have effectually determined the will (had grace been improved) to abominate and flee the temptation. Whereas behold, upon the contrary, the will hastned its consent, embracing the proposal, and thereby practically preferring the testimony of the father of lies, unto the positive assertion of the God of truth. Astonishing transgression !

In sum, neither the secret eternal decree of redemption at the time altogether unknown to man. Nor yet the beauty of the forbidden fruit known to be (at best) but some spirituous fine coloured dust, nor the peremptory assertion of the serpent known at highest, to be but the words of some intelligent finite creature : I say, none of all these severally or conjunctly, could ever have by force deleted the two grand concreated principles of man's obedience ; to wit, 1. That God was his chief good, which was deeply impressed on the human mind : And 2dly, That a superlative love and perfect obedience unto this God, was at once both his duty and interest. Had man duly improved these two ; The great light of the mind, and the great power of the will, were such, as all the apostate angels in hell, (and much less one) with all their contrivance and subtilty, nor all the trees in the garden, with all their various beauties and usefulness, could never have forced him. And therefore, the conclusion of all, must certainly be, that the first Adam in the garden destroyed himself and all his posterity.

In fine, The second Adam stood by a little till the dark ground colors of sin and misery, were deeply laid, that so he might thereupon raise a far

more glorious representation, and display of the divine wisdom, power and goodness, than what man in all the glory of his first estate, could ever possibly do. So that it was not for want of wisdom, power and goodness in the deity, that this sin and fall of man came to pass ; but only to raise their glory higher. Redemption work requiring by far, a higher elevation of those foresaid divine perfections, in their actings, than man's simple confirmation, in his original condition could ever have done. The God that had preserved millions of elect angels, could certainly far more easily have preserved one Adam : But this was not such a proper measure towards advancing the divine glory.

This grand transgression of Adam's though in its matter, to wit, eating a little fruit, it may be looked upon, as a most mean and insignificant action ; yet if we consider it, in its formal nature, as disobedience to an express divine command ; which precept was particularly chosen out, and enjoyn'd as the test, of man's pure love, just gratitude, and absolute obedience to God, it was certainly a most heinous sin. For behold, what monstrous infidelity, ingratitude and diabolical pride, were all at once implied in the same ?

All which will be the more clear, if we consider that by this sin Man 1: openly dethroned God, denying him for his sovereign. 2^{dly}, Avowedly exalted the deity's greatest enemy on the throne, swearing Allegiance unto him : By which means, 3^{dly}. Man renewed satan's ambitious design against God, accomplishing in his favour on earth, what he could not bring about for himself in heaven. even raising him (as it were) above the deity, in believing and obeying him more than God, and thereby at once repairing satan's disappointment, and upon the matter, mocking the deity's banishment of him from heaven. Again, 4^{thly}. By this revolt

revolt of the Lord of the lower world, behold God's first design in creation, was not only in a great measure broken, but the possession & government of this lower world, (so far as was in man's power) transmitted over to another, even to the God of this world, to possess its obedience and glory, *2 Cor. iv. 4.* And then *5thly*, All this affront done the deity, in his face, and in sight of the holy angels. And moreover *6thly*, Perpetrated by an earth-worm, yesterday nothing, against infinite majesty. Neither is this all, but behold, *7thly*. This grand transgression, was committed against a reasoning and reproving conscience, *Gen. iii. 3.* and against sufficient strength (if improved) to have come off the conqueror.

And then finally, let us remember, how it was done, against the greatest, most generous and obliging goodness: for behold man, who was but just now the bit of clay and handful of dust, is made Lord of all; and yet he is the very person, who is found to be this atrocious offender. And therefore, who can but cry out? Increasing treason! Rebellion in heaven, attended instantly with a new Rebellion on earth. Horrid conspiracy! Surely no wonder, if God had never taken upon him the nature of man, more than the nature of angels, *Psal. viii. 4.* Briefly, What words, can sufficiently declare the grossness and malignity of this first and great sin? Monstrous act! pregnant at once, with all the future sin and misery of mankind! In fine, let us consider it, as the death of life, and the life of death: who can describe it?

The just demerit and condign punishment of this heinous transgression, who can sufficiently unfold? An offending worm can never satisfy the offended majesty. The peasant, as being of one blood, (*Acts xvii. 26.*) with the prince, may by his life, justly satisfy for the greatest offences; but
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the crawling worm can never. And therefore no wonder, if this offending worm, be never annihilated or absolutely destroyed, that so, it may be for ever crushed, in the lowest hell. But now let us a little survey, the fatal effects of this first and great sin of Adam's that to the glorious second Adam, in his redeeming mercy and power, may become exceeding precious. - Toward clearing of which,

The Apostle Paul, in a very few words, *Rom. v. 12.* By the direction of the Holy Ghost, declareth, that by one man's offence, to wit, Adam's (for none other can with the least shew of reason be alledged) first, sin entered into the world. And then 2dly. That thereby death came upon all men. The effects then, of this sin, are these two, 1. All mankind by it, in the account of justice, became really guilty of the breach of the covenant, equally with Adam. For as was cleared already at great length, the consent of all mankind, was not only morally and virtually given in Adam, by God's constituting him the moral head of all his posterity, but that further on our part, in point of indispensable obligation and duty, it was as necessarily and really given, as if every individual had been actually present. And therefore referring any objections on this head, unto the answers already given; I say, It is plain, both from scripture and reason, that in Adam all sinned, and are become guilty, yea, even guilty of that great transgression, in all its heinous aggravations: And seeing it is so, who then in reason will, or can entertain mean thoughts of original sin?

It is true indeed, when infants are new born, the innocence of their countenance and passiveness in all things done unto them; their tender helpless condition, together with some natural pleasantness about them, altogether veil this guilt: beholders quite forgetting how in Adam all man-
kind

kind did really consent and concur in that horrid treasonable action ; And how the pleasantest & most lovely child, born among men, are inwardly poisoned with a cursed contrariety and enmity against the holy nature and law of God, *Rom. viii. 7. Psal. lviii. 3.* And thus as the external innocence and beauty of the natural serpent, in the garden, did obscure the horrid guilt, and poisonous venom of the old moral serpent lurking therein, so our children being for the time, innocent of all actual transgression, and naturally bearing our likeness ; self love, will not allow us to see any thing of satan's image in them : We no ways calling to mind, that our children, are no less really Adam's moral branches, than what they are our natural offspring.

Again 2dly. A'l then being thus guilty, behold death as the just demerit and threatned punishment upon sin, attacketh all mankind, *Gen. ii. 17* — *Thou shalt surely die*, to wit, naturally, spiritually and eternally. As for the nature and equity of this punishment, let us consider, that nothing can be more reasonable and equal, than these three.

As first, seeing the rational soul and human body, (created and united to glorify God) did upon their union, conspire together against their maker, to his great dishonour ; Nothing thereupon, can certainly be more just, than that this union should be dissolved, and never be restored again, till either justice should be fully satisfied for sin, or else in order unto a joint undergoing in soul and body, the wrath due unto the same. Nothing then, can be more consonant to reason than that, natural death, I mean, the afflictive gradual dissolution of this union, should be inflicted, upon sinful man. For man inverting (by his sin) the designed end of his creation, no wonder if God dissolve his natural constitution

constitution. Seeing the supreme and ultimate end of the human natural life, was denied the deity (so far as man could disappoint him) surely much more, ought the subordinate ends, of continued temporal happiness be denied man. Briefly, he that will not live to God, deserveth not to live to himself: Neither can the deity be obliged, for ever to preserve a serpent, or cherish a cockatrice in his bosom.

Again 2dly. It is no less evident to reason, that seeing man did not improve the noble spiritual life, bestowed upon him at creation; which was so perfect, as to maintain itself (if improved) against all opposition, that then certainly, he is most justly liable unto spiritual death. For considering how man enjoyed all the necessities and greatest comforts of this life, together with an assurance of immortality therein, only upon condition, he would not destroy himself: Who will not say, But, if man after all this goodness, voluntarily neglecteth the means of life; but that he most justly deserveth to die. *Hos. xiii. 9*

This spiritual life, consisting in the perfect knowledge of God and his will, in the human mind; together with perfect love to God, and delight in his law, in the will; qualifying and enabling man for perfect obedience, in order unto perfect and intimate communion with God; Let us on the other hand see, how justly spiritual death in all its part, comes in the room of the foresaid spiritual life, by reason of man's sin.

And first, Seeing the noble human mind, that leading power of the soul, indued with perfect knowledge of the deity and his will, did so unaccountably give way, and lowre before the small cloud or vapour of the serpent's assertion, which its strong beams (if duly improved) might easily have dispelled, how just was it for the provoked majesty, absolutely to withdraw the divine light,
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and suffer spiritual darkness to come in its room. If the natural sun, because of a little cloud's coming over him, should stop his course, how just were it, his light should be turned into darkness.

Again *2dly*, considering how the will, that high commanding power, which might have laughed a fallen angel to scorn, did so quickly and voluntarily, at once exchange God, the chief good, yea, and that though certainly experience to be such, for an alledged uncertain happiness: And further, considering how quickly it did exchange the express divine law (the most infallible rule) and that for the dictates of a fallible lying creature: Can any thing after such unaccountable actings, be more reasonable, than that the human will, should now 1. have vanity for its object, seeing vanity was its choice: For, considering how it preferred an uncertain promise from satan, unto the infallible promise of the God of truth; It was certainly but highly reasonable that, that noble faculty of the human will should be degraded, and made foolishly to seek for its happiness from the vain and changeable creature. And again *secondly*. Seeing, the practical understanding choosed for its rule, a contradiction to the holy divine rule, *Gen. iii 3*. No wonder then, if it was given up to the power of satan, and enslaved to the law of sin. And thus these leading and commanding faculties and powers of the soul, being once corrupted; it is obvious, that all the more subordinate, must be so too.

Briefly, when man had by his grand transgression provoked the Holy Ghost to desert him, satan entered and inspired him, with the diabolical principles of error and enmity. For man being a moral rational being, he must of necessity be good or evil: And some perfection or other in the deity, must be glorified by him. An all-wise God, can
never

never make and preserve such an excellent creature in vain. And therefore, if man, will not be holy, he must be wicked, and if he be wicked, he must be for the day of evil; serving to glorify justice, in that solemn and great day of wrath, *Pro. xvi. 4.*

The premisses being duly considered: what sober mind is it? Free of sinful curiosity, that may not have full satisfaction concerning the manner of the conveyance of original sin, from Father to Son; more especially if the following gradation, consisting of these four steps, be but a little noticed. As first, That Adam by sin, destroyed in himself all spiritual life, and in and by the very same act introduced darkness, enmity and sensuality, into the mind, will and affections; which lead and influence all the other powers of the soul, together with the whole members of the outward man. Again *secondly*, upon this, God judicially left man, in this guilty and corrupted state, giving him up to the power thereof: seeing man would rebel, and corrupt his nature, like the apostate angels; nothing could be more just, than for God judicially to say amen: That so man might know the difference, betwixt his first and second Lord; Obedience and disobedience. And then *thirdly*, Let us consider, That Adam in this first and great transgression, being the moral head of all his posterity, the spiritual death, introduced upon him thereby, contained in it, not only his own personal punishment; for his personal guilt, but also, let it be remembered, that justice inflicted upon him, the aforesaid spiritual death, as the common natural head, and stock of all mankind, for their sinning in him, as their moral head: Yea, and that upon this very design, that the whole race, might also be punished with the same justice, according to the extent of the threatening in the first covenant, *Gen. ii. 17.* requiring no less. Upon all which,

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Adam thus guilty and corrupted, being the common parent and stock, by ordinary generation, of all the human race ; not only justice, in a moral way, but also, on the other hand, the universal and unalterable natural law of all finite second causes, in a physical way, rendering it impossible, for him to propagate or produce any progeny, but of the same nature with himself : And that without any change, either of the kind, or of the eminent innate qualities affecting the same. All which considerations greatly cleareth, and accounteth for the corruption of the branches, as coming from the corruption of the stock. Accordingly, the Holy Ghost by *Job*, preacheth it as an impossible thing, --- *To bring a clean thing out of an unclean, Job xiv. 4.* And that which is *born of the Flesh, must of Necessity be Flesh, John iii. 6.* Briefly Corruption can never be the parent of grace : Nor can darkness produce light ; nor enmity love ; nor sensuality spiritual mindedness. For even David an elect vessel, a great favourite of heaven, and in due time to share deeply of sanctifying grace ; yet as soon as he became a branch of old Adam, behold *he was conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, Psal. li. 5.*

It is true, nothing purely moral, as such, can be produced efficiently by any physical material cause. But as true it is, (not to speak of the great sympathy, in manifold respects, both spiritual and bodily, which is seen daily, betwixt parents and children, conveyed in the course of ordinary generation) I say, not to enlarge on these, if either on the one hand, we mind the parents begetting and conceiving, to be both most corrupt ; or on the other, that justice stands indispensibly obliged, by the breach of the first covenant, *Gen. ii. 17.* immediately upon the existence of a child of Adam's to inflict the death threatened ; there can remain no

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Mystery in the soul's being corrupted, upon its union with the body, and the body upon its union with the soul. It is true, these two essential parts, while asunder, and previous to their union, they are the workmanship of God, whose holy hands, can defile nothing; but then, on the other hand, it is no less certain, that upon their union together, instantly, the base pestilential blood of old, guilty, corrupt Adam, runs through all the veins, both of the inward and outward man, spoiling the whole person, with its plague.

I shall now gladly close this subject of original sin: Only before I leave this branch of spiritual death, come upon all mankind, by Adam's sin, there is one native inference arising from it; which cannot be overlooked: In regard, I know no article of gospel doctrine, in which the glory of Christ, and the salvation of men, is more concerned. The inference is,

That since absolute spiritual death, hath intallibly seized all mankind, by Adam's first sin, that then certainly, there is now no power naturally in any man (previous to regeneration) for performing, even upon the highest moral swasion, the least spiritual good, or holy action.

So that, one holy thought, word or deed, proceeding from right principles, motives and ends, is absolutely impossible to man in nature; for, these two, can never be separate; absolute spiritual death, and absolute impotency to all spiritual good. For, if any inherent power, (yea, the least that possibly can be conceived) to perform spiritual good remain, yet with fallen man, then of necessity, there is some spiritual life, yet to be found with him: every real act requiring a real power, in its principle, bearing proportion to the nature of the act performed by it. But that there is no spiritual life, even to the least degree, to be found now naturally with man,

is most evident, both from scripture and reason.

The strength of this argument, depending upon the probation of absolute spiritual death, its seizing upon Adam, and all mankind, upon his sin; which being upon serious reflection, a truth (when once revealed) as much consonant, unto and confirmed by reason itself, as any contained in holy scripture, let us therefore, allow a few serious thoughts, upon these five following arguments; as clearing and establishing this great *Anti-arminian* position.

As *First*, Let us consider, that the spiritual life originally in man, was the principal part of the deity's image, after which he was created; and next, that then certainly the necessary respect, which the deity owed to his own honor and majesty obliged him, upon man's sinning, to take this his image of spiritual life, intirely down: for nothing but impotency, to resent such an affront done the image of God, in man's soul, or base meanness of spirit, could possibly hinder the absolute subtraction of the divine image, consisting in knowledge, righteousness and holiness, upon the introduction of satan's, upon the human soul. And therefore reason can never suppose, That the deity could suffer his glorious image, in the least holy remains of it, to hing so near the ugly and abominable effigies of the devil; more especially, to be set upon the left hand, satan's having gotten the right, in point of predominacy. Can ever light have such fellowship with darkness? Briefly, the Holy Ghost, could not but absolutely leave the temple of man's soul, upon satan's being introduced, to the possession of the throne: And reason will never allow a man to conceive the *Holy, Holy, Holy* Lord God of Hosts, to share man's soul betwixt him and the wicked one.

Again, *2dly*. Another argment proving absolute spiritual death to have seized all mankind, is,

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not only the divine respect^d the deity hath to his own image ; but vastly different natures, of the image of God and of satan : So that considering, the incompatible opposite natures of grace and sin, holiness and corruption ; the very nature of things must alter (which is impossible) or the *Arminian* doctrine of the power of nature and free-will must fall to the ground.

For, it must be acknowledged, that certainly when man sinned and fell, that then sin became the predominant principle, and got the reigning power in the human soul. For if grace still had the ascendant and reigning power, then *First*, How did satan overcome man ? And *2dly*, Why is man, termed fallen, dead in trespasses and sins ; and one in whose heart every imagination of the thoughts thereof, is only evil continually. *Eph. ii 1 Gen. vi. 5.* So that sin having become the *predominant reigning principle* in the human nature ; it is there-upon undeniable, that grace or spiritual life, cannot be naturally with man upon the throne ; acting there, as the reigning and living principle of his nature ; which it must necessarily be, before he can have any real power for spiritual good. Briefly, either God or satan, grace or sin, must be upon the throne ; and not both : For who ever of them reigns (so contrary and opposite are their natures) that one keepeth absolutely the dominion, *Rom. vi. 14*: In fine, If the *strong man* keep the house, all his goods are at peace. But if the *stronger* come and bind him ; then he taketh from him all his armour, wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils, *Luke xi. 21, 22.*

As for the mixture of grace and corruption in the Godly : Corruption first had the intire possession, to evidence the divine resentment of man's despising his image, *Eph. ii 1. Secondly*, Grace, its entry, is upon the account of the full satisfaction,

tion, given to justice by Christ, in his peoples room, *Rev. i. 5.* *Thirdly*, It enters now as a conqueror, not to live at peace, but to kill, and in due time to eradicate sin ; yea. upon its very first entry, it giveth indwelling sin it's dead stroak, *Rom. vi. 14.* So that all its motions afterwards, are but the strugglings of a beheaded man : All which being acts most worth of the deity, and no ways reflecting upon any of the divine perfections. they are most consistent with the aforesaid arguments, no ways diminishing, but rather establishing the force of the same.

A Third argument for confirming the aforesaid truth, is, That the glory and perfection of the divine truth, stood engaged by the peremptory threatning, *Gen. ii. 17.* absolutely to substract spiritual life, and inflict spiritual death upon sinning man : From which it is argued ; That either man did die or not, in the day he did eat ; if he did die, then we have what is disputed for ; and let spiritual life no more be attributed unto him : if not, then let the *Arminian* explain these words, *Gen. ii. 17* — *In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die ;* and at the same time account sufficiently for the glory of the divine truth. For in vain is it, to object, that man did not die in the foresaid day, naturally nor eternally, and therefore, why is the peremptoriness of the threatning only urged as to spiritual death ; for certain it is, that the very day in which man sinned, death in its full three fold import, was at the same time inflicted upon him, in the full sense, in which the threatning could possibly be intended by God.

This assertion perhaps at first may be a little surprizing: but a very few thoughts may come to convince us of the truth and certainty thereof ; in order to which, let us only first consider the public covenant relation, in which Adam stood, when
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he was thus threatned, upon supposition of disobedience; and thereupon next. *2dly.* Let us call to mind, that the import of the foresaid threatening, must certainly be consistent, with the nature of the foresaid relation, and the extent of the foresaid disobedience.

And therefore accordingly, natural death, however in its mortal seeds, and forerunners, it might affect Adam from that very hour, yet as to the completion of it, the threatening could never possibly intend the day of his disobedience to be the term thereof: for it is evident, that thereby his natural posterity, with whom the covenant was made, as truly as with himself, could not have descended from him.

And again, as to eternal death, behold the very hour of sinning, not only did he, and all his posterity become liable unto it, and were deprived of the glorious forerunners of eternal life, to wit, the special divine favour and fellowship with God, but also, on the other hand, behold the dreadful sparks and kindlings thereof, in the frownings of the deity, the condemnings of conscience, fear of wrath, horrid confusion and consternation, which were all to be found with Adam, in the day that he sinned; *Gen. iii. 7. 8.* And that he was not actually that day cast into the lake, was not any short-coming, in the fulfilling of the threatening; but for the reason already given, to wit, that the disobedience threatned, was not only the disobedience of personal Adam, but of the moral head of mankind; and therefore that the punishment might run parallel with the extent of the sin, Adam must not that day be cast into hell, but be spared to become the natural head of all his posterity.

So that still it is peremptorily affirmed, That the threatening was as fully and condignly inflicted, both as to natural and eternal death, as what God really

really intended, or the nature of the thing possibly could allow; in the hour, when the deity, pronounced the same. Yea more, to suppose any thing less, is certainly to impeach the infinite perfection and glory of the divine truth, which is the same in the deity, both as to threatnings and promises: And further, for God to have in the least failed in the first grand threatning, was certainly not consistent with the infinite wisdom, majesty and conduct, of the supream and all-wise governor and judge of the world. Briefly. Upon the whole, it is now evident, that so far as the threatning was really intended by God, and so far as Adam, (as the moral head of all his posterity,) was capable of the infliction of the same, that God did really fulfil and execute the same upon him, in the very day in which he sinned. And therefore, we have most solid ground to conclude, that absolute spiritual death, as being both intended in the threatning, and man fully capable of it, was certainly inflicted upon him, upon his breach of the covenant, *Rom. iii. 23.*

If any should here urge, why may not the beginnings only of spiritual death, as well as natural and eternal, be supposed to have been inflicted upon man. The answer is obvious, because *First*, spiritual death, though absolutely inflicted, no ways hindred Adams surviving, as the natural head and stock of mankind, which either natural or eternal death would have done; and thereby marred the accomplishment of the eternal decrees relative to the manifold generations of the children of men. *2dly*, The absolute dominion of sin, (as was said already) though consistent with the natural, yet is not so with the spiritual life. For, no man can serve two masters; grace or sin must have the throne in all moral agents, *Mat. vi. 24.* And therefore seeing man hated his first Lord and law-giver,

law-giver, and hath loved the latter, it is impossible in nature, but fallen man must be subjected to the law and influence of the power upon the throne, and seeing satan, and sin, with man's own consent, got the ascendant, over God and grace, in the hour of temptation, its easy to judge, what kind of power to do good, it is, that can remain now with fallen man.

The fourth argument evincing this truth, is the nature and glory of the divine justice, rendring it simply impossible for any spiritual life, in the least degree, to be left with Adam, upon his sin : All which will be the more clear, if we consider that the wilful contempt and abuse of spiritual life, together with the violence done unto it by man, had no punishment fully adequate and proportioned unto such a crime, less than spiritual death. For, he that will not live spiritually, when in his power, and who voluntarily doth that, which he knows will destroy spiritual life, *Gen. iii. 3*. He certainly is not condignly punished, as what he deserveth, till he undergo spiritual death : And hence, were self murder consistent with life, infallibly the most cruel and disgraceful death, would be reckoned but an equal punishment, for such a horrid crime. And therefore, even after death, the bodies of such persons, are only disgraced, and in their burial separated from others. And seeing the self destroyers of natural life, deserve this treatment, how much more the destroyer of spiritual life, as being by far, more excellent, than the other.

Briefly, God being infinite, in wisdom, justice and righteousness, it is simply impossible, he would either go below or above the real desert of sin, in the punishment thereof : And therefore seeing he appointed death, to be its punishment, certainly no less can satisfy justice ; and if so, which way, the

the least degree of spiritual life could remain with Adam upon his sinning ; Is what reason cannot so easily comprehend. And if no spiritual life, was left in Adam (till regenerating Grace through Christ restored the same) which way then, any man descending from him (previous to regeneration) should have a power to do good, to turn from sin, embrace Christ, and follow true holiness, is such a mystery, that till once its author and way of conveyance and undeniable effects be declared ; no man of solid sense and reason will reckon himself obliged to believe the same.

The fifth argument, proving this important truth, is the great improvement, which God from eternity, designed to make in time, of the breach of the covenant of works : which was to glorify the riches and power of the divine grace, not only in creating again this new nature in the elect out of nothing, but in raising them from this spiritual death, in spite of the strong bonds of gross ignorance, Atheism, unbelief, enmity, and sensuality, *Eph. 2. 1. and 10 verses. Col. i. 12, 13.* And this was most wisely ordered, that so the whole praise of salvation, from the first quickning motion in the souls of the elect, unto the last perfecting stroke in redemption work, might intirely redound to God in Christ ; and that the redeemed might no ways share therein, *1 Pet. iii. 4. 5.*

Whereas on the other hand, If there be any spiritual life, or the least degree of saving power to perform spiritual good naturally with any man, previous unto supernatural grace, then not only was there no wisdom in the divine permission of the fall, but the whole glorious complex contrivance of the adorable trinity, with respect to Christ's incarnation, death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession, is all in vain. For if man have a power and freedom in his nature and will, upon
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moral swasion, to determine his will, and actually, turn himself from sin unto God, by faith, repentance and new obedience, then according to the tenor of the scriptures, *Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Mark xvi. 16.* God stands obliged to bestow salvation upon him. So that man can be a Saviour to himself; and all the deep counsels of God, about a redeemer unto him, instead of being the manifold wisdom of God, *Ephesians iii. 10.* have only been foolish and vain speculations. And finally, (if matters be thus) what ever notes we may sing in heaven, to his creator for natural power, there shall be no room left for singing the song of the lamb, *Rev. 1. 5.*—*Unto him that loved us, and hath washed us in his own blood.*

Upon the whole, it is plain from the premisses, that the asserters of a natural power and freedom in man's will, upon the proposal of suitable motives to turn himself to God, doth at once rob the deity of his own glory, and deprived him of the great perfections of truth, justice and wisdom; plainly saying, that God would truckle to the devil, in suffering his image to be erected not only beside, but above the divine image in man's soul, without withdrawing his own; And that in the solemn threatening the God of truth was yea and nay: And that man's horrid attempt and violence upon the noble spiritual life, was not criminal, in justice; and that the divine wisdom, in the eternal counsels of redemption, was absolutely vain and to no purpose. In fine, That man both died and lived spiritually at one and the same time.

So that plainly, the state of the question now is; Whether shall we yet adore and worship the *Arminian Dagon* of the power of free-will, in contempt of all the fore-said glorious perfections of the deity? or shall we solidly believe and acknowledge the divine justice, wisdom and truth, and allow
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this great dagon to fall to the ground, and break himself to pieces, before the presence of those great divine excellencies of the God of *Israel*.

I know that some of the more subtile disputants for this *Arminian* doctrine; when they find themselves straitned, by arguments bearing hard upon the same; and particularly, when they are urged to declare the nature of this power, in man's will, to turn himself unto God, to wit, whether it be of a common or saving kind, that so the world may know what kind of grace to call it, and what fruits to expect from it; whether such as accompany salvation, or such as are only transitory and perishing; I say, when they are thus urged, they, as being very loath to disclaim this doctrine (so very pleasant and acceptable unto proud man) at length are obliged to affirm, That this power & freedom in man's will, consisteth in an indifferency unto good or evil, So that (according to them) man hath power to turn himself to what is good or what is evil, according to his own pleasure. And thus they place man's will exactly, in *Æquilibrio*, making it the ballance, that may turn either way, according as man himself pleaseth. So that they will not allow of the distinction of common and saving grace *a priori*, or previous to the exercise of this power, but only *a posteriori*, to wit as the will actually determineth itself to good or evil; so accordingly they will allow this power to be saving, or not.

To all which, I shall only reply a few considerations, towards the discovering the unaccountableness and gross absurdity of this description of the power and freedom of man's will, that so their last subterfuge, may be seen to be meer sham, as having nothing of reality or solidity in it, but only a meer stretch of corrupt wit, and wicked invention.

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And therefore first let us consider, That the placing the power and freedom of man's will, in an indifferency to good or evil, to be improved as what man pleaseth himself; is an assertion, so flatly giving God the lie, and so directly flying in the face of clear explicit scripture, that no sober mind professing to believe the divinity of the holy scriptures, can ever be supposed (upon the least serious-reflection) to adhere unto the same. For how plain and positive is God in describing man's corruption to be such, as is altogether inconsistent with this doctrine, *Gen. vi. 5. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great, in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* After which divine description of the heart of man, extending to every imagination thereof, and asserting the same to be evil, yea, to be only evil, and to be so continually; to wit, while in an unregenerate state; if any person will still continue to affirm an indifferency in the will of man, equally to good as to evil; he must certainly not only know something in man, which the deity is ignorant of, but also must be acquainted with something in the powers and faculties of the human soul, quite contrary unto what an omniscient and heart-searching God hath discerned therein. Besides, it is truly strange, considering the repeated peremptory assertions of the necessity of fresh actual influences of grace unto believers themselves (whose natures are sanctified) in order to their thinking a good thought, or performing the least spiritual good, *John xv. 5. 2 Cor. iii. 5.* That any reasonable man, can have the confidence to affirm, That man naturally and previous to regeneration, hath an equal power for the doing of good, as what he hath, for the doing of evil.

Again, *2dly.* If this doctrine hold, of an indifferency

ferency in man's will unto good or evil ; so that man may either believe or not believe. repent or not repent, be sinful or truly holy, as he pleaseth himself ; then certainly the great fundamental doctrines of the holy scriptures at once fall : For, if this principle be a truth, then let God no more speak of election, for every man can save himself (if he will) and so record his own name in the book of life, and that whether God hath done it or not. So also let our Lord never more preach of this way to life, its being strait, or of there being only few that find it ; for, according to this doctrine, who is it that may not, peremptorily say, and resolve that he will have heaven, and the great salvation, and thereupon determine his will to accept of Christ, and turn to true holiness, so that all mankind, in gross may come there. Briefly, according to this tenet, God the Father elected in vain ; And our Lord died in vain, as to the purchasing of spiritual life unto his people ; and the holy Ghost creates in vain any such principle in them, seeing they are naturally endued with a power (if improved, sufficient for salvation. Yea more, according to this principle, the whole of man's moral actings and determinations, yea even such as respect his eternal state and condition, are all absolutely dependent upon his own, and independent of the deity's will. So that the children of men may, intirely regulate their way and walk in this life, and their eternal condition in the life to come, as they please themselves : And if so, let the dominion of both worlds, present and to come, be no more ascribed unto the Almighty God, but only unto the mighty will of man. Yea, let the deity (*absit Blasphemia*) have a care of innumerable surprize, in one day, as not knowing *a priori*, which way the will of man (standing thus in *Equilibrio*) will turn, or determine it self ; yea

that even in the greatest and most important actions of the human life.

It is true, that some plead that if this indifference be not in man's will to do good or evil, that then the glorious liberty of human actions suitable to intelligent rational natures, is taken away; man being determined, by extrinsic divine power, and decrees, before he determine himself, and so allowed no choice; and consequently acts not with freedom and liberty.

In answer to which; it would be considered; that man having misimproved original grace, and thereby having lost all power, even all spiritual light and life towards the performing any spiritual good. There now remaineth nothing but bondage and slavery unto sin and satan in the will of man, *Eph. ii. 2.* So that man's heart now, is wholly set in him to do evil, *Psal. x. 5.* And therefore, 2dly. It is evident that a supernatural gracious power must determine the will of corrupt man, before ever he can in sincerity, so much as desire or choose; but much more before he can perform any thing spiritually good *Psal. ex. 3.* From all which, 3dly. It cannot but also be most obvious, That any liberty or freedom in acting, which man hath ground to desire or rejoice in, must not consist in an indifference to good or evil, but on the contrary, in the will's being powerfully and sweetly determined by a saving illumination of the mind, discovering the excellency and glory of the object, and by an irresistible perswasive divine influence upon it self, causing it most cordially and spontaneously, without the least of violence or force, to embrace the same. And the more this determination of the will, is fixed and secured by eternal immutable divine decrees, relative unto the same; it is certain that man owes

so much the more unto the deity; and will no doubt acknowledge the same, as soon as, he seriously reflecteth upon the great mutability and fallibility, even of perfect Adam, when power and freedom in his will, towards the doing of good was in its greatest perfection.

And therefore upon the whole, considering the glorious liberty and freedom with which the deity acteth, who yet is only, and necessarily determined to what is good; and considering also how the holy angels act most freely and spontaneously in the whole of their service and obedience unto God, who yet at the same time can never turn unto sin; it is evident, That indifference to good or evil must be very far from being the liberty or freedom which mutable imperfect man, needs to be fond of. And therefore, considering this notion or description of liberty, in relation to fallen corrupt man, to be but a meer fiction and chimera: More especially seeing all actual saving faith, repentance and new obedience, doth necessarily require a real positive principle of spiritual life, bearing (proportion to those spiritual acts and performances,) to be first planted in the soul; which, (as hath been proved) man, naturally, is absolutely void of. I say, considering all these together, it remains still to be a very close reasoning with the *Arminians*, to urge them to declare whether it be common or saving grace, that is naturally with man towards the doing of good. Forseeing this (alleged) indifference to good or evil, can never be put into exercise in relation to good, without a positive principle of spiritual life in man; Then certainly they stand obliged, *First*; To prove that such a principle is truly to be found naturally in man. And *2dly*. That in its nature it is truly of a spiritual saving kind, capable of bringing forth fruit of the same nature: otherways we must be allowed to

warn them, That their general fond notion, of man's power and liberty, as consisting in an indifferency to good or evil; may well buoy them up with hopes of becoming religious, and saving themselves when they please; but withal, if they get not the positive principle of special saving grace, there is all the ground in the world to fear, that they themselves, will not be indifferent, about this indifferency through eternity, *John* iii. 3.

In sum, The conclusion of all is, that seeing no vital act can rise higher, than the nature and power of its principle, from which it proceedeth: Then let every solid man (while unregenerate) pretend only to acts, bearing proportion to the vegetative, animal and merely rational life: But no ways unto any that are spiritual or truly holy, or that accompany salvation; till once (*John* i. 13.) He be born of God; and thereupon endued with a supernatural principle of a spiritual life, enabling him savingly to know and love God in Christ, and from love, to obey, and in obeying, to design the divine glory; *Ezek.* xxxvi. 26 27. All other acts of religious obedience, not thus qualified, being but meer sham and dead form in godliness. Briefly, The first and great commandment, so termed by our Lord; *Matth.* xxii. 37, 38. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and all thy strength: Will, and must be the foundation principle, and living spring, in the human soul, of all true and acceptable religion, to the end of the world. So that, suppose the body should burn in the flames, in a religious cause, if the soul be not quickned and warmed with this principle of love, all is nothing, 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2, 3.*

To return now from the Arminian controversy, unto the manifold branches, and cursed fruit of the corruption of our nature, implied in this spiritual

tual death: They are so fully and frequently explained, that there is no necessity for enlarging upon them. No man that knows the plagues of his own heart aright, such as the gross ignorance, Atheism, unbelief, enmity, sensuality, stupidity and hypocrisy: And the manifold lusts of the flesh and of the mind, together with their numerous abominable cursed offspring of the sinful motions, thoughts, desires, projects, looks, words and actions, wrong principles, motives and ends; but will ingenuously acknowledge a strong body or army of death to be in him, *Rom. vii. 24*. And a mystery of iniquity to be in his heart, which none but the omniscient heart-searching God, can fully declare, *Jer. xvii. 9*. And will certainly thereupon cordially say *Amen* to *John vi. 44*—*That no man can come unto Christ except the Father draw him*; and seriously cry with *Ephraim, turn me, turn me, O Lord, and I shall be turned, Jer. xxxi. 18*.

We come now to the third branch of the death threatened commonly called death eternal. Sin, being an infinite evil, in respect of the party offended, and on the other hand, the impenitent finite sinner not being able to endure the infinite weight of wrath, which justice doth require to be inflicted; hence ariseth a necessity of the punishment both of loss and sense, their being infinite, in point of duration. The wicked's banishment from God, must therefore be eternal; and their worm must never die, *Matth. xxv. 41*.

To this eternal death, *Adam* in the day he sinned, not only made himself, and all his posterity liable, *Eph. ii. 3. Gal. iii. 10*. But also, (as was hinted at already) deprived himself and them of the whole beginnings and fore-runners of eternal life, which were at first enjoyed by man, in his being blessed with perfect conformity to God, and

intimate communion with him ; perfect peace in his conscience, together with a constant sense of the divine love shed abroad in his soul ; so that in place of those great blessings, absolute corruption, banishment from the divine presence, a sense of guilt and fear of wrath, are to be found naturally with rebellious man. Thus man broke the first covenant, and according to the threatening, *Gen. ii. 17. In the day he did eat, he did surely die.* Which breach of the covenant, was the fourth remarkable event in time, by which God most wisely brought about the gradual accomplishment of the eternal plan relative to the glorifying of justice and mercy upon the children of men, in time and eternity. Upon all which,

It is evident, how much this event of the breach of this first covenant made way for the eternal decrees, adjusted to the glory of justice and mercy : For first, innocent man, is now become monstrously and heinously guilty : Holy man, is now degenerated into an incarnate rebellious spirit : And all this done in the midst of a perfection of grace to obey, and of blessedness to reward and establish in the course of perfect obedience. So that here was fair access for justice to proceed. Again *Secondly*, There also now, was a door opened, for the love and mercy of God in Christ to appear and act, in most glorious displays towards the elect. For they with the rest of mankind are now cast into the open field lying in their blood, and no eye to pity them. *Ezek. xvi. 5. 6.* Love and mercy, must therefore now find out and bestow a Redeemer, to satisfy justice reconcile to God, procure pardon, restore spiritual life, and in the face of manifold opposition, must carry the good work on unto perfection, till it issue in eternal life. And all this to the eternal praise of the wonderful grace and
mercy

mercy of God in Christ, towards sinful rebels, *Eph. i. 6.*

And thus we are led natively to the consideration of the next remarkable event in time relative to the eternal plan, to wit, *The election of the glorious covenant of grace*, upon the breach of the covenant of works, in the garden.

C H A P T E R XI.

The next remarkable event in time, for accomplishing the eternal plan, was the erection and intimation of the covenant of grace, in the garden; All things being now prepared for the revelation of the great mystery of God in Christ, reconciling the world to himself. In the midnight of legal terror and darkness, our Lord broke up the morning blush of the gospel day; by the remarkable promise recorded, Gen. iii. 15. The import of these words being very great is, at considerable length opened up. The covenant of grace is found in all its parts, to be clearly implied in them. The great excellency of this new covenant, above the former, is declared: As making the Almighty God, our Adam, the divine All-sufficiency, our grace, and the immutable divine promise and oath, our security. By this covenant, that great branch of the eternal plan relative to the displaying the glory of the divine love and mercy, is fully provided for. The only remaining question, is, What now becometh of the other branch, relative to the glory of justice? And whether or not, hath providence

providence any further use for the broken covenant of works : Or is it absolutely gone ? In answer to which, it is found, that two covenants being now erected by God, the divine wisdom requireth, that they should mutually conspire together, towards the accomplishing the several parts of the eternal plan. As 1. The broken covenant of works, by the two great remains, of its law and penalty, must alarm the elect, sending them to Christ for the grace of the second covenant. And then 2dly, On the other hand, the covenant of grace, when rejected, in its great offers and promises, must send back the despisers, unto the hands and glory of justice, in the first covenant, according to the curse and penalty thereof : Briefly, The first covenant, does pave the way, for glorifying justice, upon all obstinate, impenitent sinners ; and the second must exalt the riches of grace and mercy, upon all believing, repenting persons.

TH E *Fifth* remarkable event in time, paving the way for the eternal project, was the erection and intimation of a new and second covenant, even the wonderful, and never enough displayed covenant of grace ; which God made, and at first did promulgate to fallen man in the garden, in those most remarkable, though few words, *Gen. iii. 15.*

All things were now prepared for the revelation of that great mystery of God in Christ, reconciling the world to himself. The three great preparatory steps necessary thereunto, were all now over ; For 1. Man had now been created perfectly holy and happy ; congruous to the infinite holiness, and great goodness of the deity ; both
which

which perfections, were greatly proclaimed by the human creation. 2dly, A covenant had been made with man, most just in its demands, and no ways above, but equal to his power : Great in its promises, containing a most compleat happiness, every way adjusted, to the human desires and capacities : And its threatening most solemn and weighty, crying aloud to man to stand. By which covenant, man had full access and opportunity given him, to proclaim his great original perfections, to the glory of God, and the securing eternal happiness to himself and all his posterity. By which transaction, it is evident, the deity was eternally secured against any just challenge, at man's hand, upon all events whatsoever.

Again. 3dly. This covenant man hath now *broken*, and by the breach of it, opened fully the door, for all the three principal divine perfections interested in the eternal plan, to wit, the divine sovereignty, justice and mercy ; to appear and act their several parts upon the stage. For now the breach of this covenant, having put all mankind on a level, as to sin and misery ; hereby first, the divine sovereignty, had full access to step forth and proclaim the eternal secret distinguishing decree relative to man, even to declare, whether *Cain* or *Abel*, *Esau* or *Jacob*, were the beloved of the Lord. Again *secondly*, in so far as, by the breach of this covenant, all mankind were made guilty before God : The divine justice, had thereby its way cleared to proceed without any reflection upon any other attribute in the deity. Sovereignty, did indeed from eternity, dispose of and distinguish the children of men, bestowing and withholding grace, as God pleased : But all the sovereignty in the deity, neither would, nor even could have condemned innocent man. Neither shall

shall all the wit on earth, nor subtilty in hell, be ever able to prove the foresaid eternal distinguishing decree, to have in the least iniquously influenced the human mind or will, in man's sinning and falling from God. The foresaid decree, having been an absolute secret in the deity's breast, and no manner of way direct'y nor indirect'y known unto man: It was thereupon simply impossible, that it should be either the cause or occasion of his sinning.

And then 3dly, All mankind being made miserable, in their becoming liable to all temporal and eternal evils, and being absolutely void of all power to relieve themselves, here was fair access and opportunity for the divine mercy to compassionate and pardon, and for the divine love to display itself most gloriously, towards the guilty miserable elect. Briefly, the all-wise God, having now in the conduct of providence, brought about these wise and necessary preliminaries: Behold the eternal secret platform, relative to redemption, comes next to be declared.

Accordingly the Lord, in a time never to be forgotten, in the riches of his love and mercy, left trembling confounded man, *Gen. iii. 8.* should have sunk into despair, caused the morning blush of the gospel day to appear, and that without any loss of time, in the very midnight of legal terror and darkness, by proclaiming to man, that great and comprehensive sermon, relative to the seed of the woman, *Gen. iii. 15.* In which sermon, God himself, was the first preacher of this glorious contrivance, as knowing none less could quiet man's troubled conscience: Astonishing, condescending and seasonable love!

The words of the foresaid sermon were but few, but of great import: Yea (if fully considered containing

taining no less in them, than the whole substantial parts of the eternal plan, so far as it concerneth men : The words thereof are,

And I will put enmity, between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed ; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.
Gen. iii. 15.

In which words, we may consider these things, First ; The glorious promulgator or person speaking, to wit the Son of God, *Gen. iii. 8.* And they heard the voice of the Lord God—Not speaking, but walking, as being the eternal word or Son of God : All which the learned Dr. Owen insisteth more particularly upon, in his treatise on the epistle to the *Hebrews*.

I say, our Lord being the person chosen to accomplish this plan, by his incarnation, he now descends and intimates to man, in this critical and dark hour, what he had engaged to do, for him from eternity, *Prov. 8. 23.* Infinite love admitted no delay. 2dly, We may consider, the manner of the Son's appearance at this time : He neither appears in the human nature, as to Simeon of old, nor yet in the human shape, as to *Jacob* and *Abraham*, *Gen. xxxii. 24.* But in a way of an immediate divine voice in the garden (*Gen. iii. 9.*) mixed with majesty and meekness, that so man, to whom the mytterious doctrine of incarnation could not but at first be a great depth ; might not suspect its truth and certainty, from the disguise of its author : But hearing it immediately from the deity, appearing as formerly unto him, might be obliged to give solid assent and consent unto the same. Briefly, the divine presence, must in this dispensation, be immediate ; man having been so lately, fatally imposed upon, by the voice of satan, under the covert of the serpent, *Gen. iii. 1.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Let us behold the eternal distinguishing decree, relative to mankind, now taking place. All mankind in this verse, is now openly declared, to be divided into the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent; meaning by the former, the Lord Jesus Christ, God-man, and all those of mankind who receiving his spirit, are conformed unto him in nature, frame and walk, *Isai. lix. 21.* And by the latter *Satan*, and all those of mankind, who as born poisoned with the diabolical seed of enmity against God: So accordingly they live and die with the same: Some of them more openly, others of them more secretly, but all of them in heart enemies to God and godliness, *Rom. viii. 7.* And thus as from the beginning in *Cain* and *Abel*, so through time and eternity, this division of mankind hath, and shall hold: as being continued by an irreconcilable hatred betwixt our Lord and the wicked one; the seed of God and the seed of the serpent: All which fundamentally ariseth from the essential differences, which are betwixt the divine and diabolical natures. Thus *Michael* and his Angels, and the *Dragon* and his Angels, shall eternally be at variance: Hence also, in the day of judgment, shall arise the final and eternal separation, of the wheat from the tares, and of the sheep from the goats. In fine, the plan before time, will hold in eternity after time; the counsels of the deity cannot be yea and nay, *Psal. xxxiii. 11.*

Again *Fourthly,* As the eternal distinguishing decree was here now intimated, so the eternal hidden mystery of the gift of the Son of God unto the elect, begins now also to be revealed. Yea, and that so fully, that not only his incarnation, in his being the seed of the woman, and his passion, in his human nature, expressed by the bruising of his heel; but also the glorious and perfect conquest
over

over the devil, by his bruising his head, are all with one breath preach'd, in this wonderful sermon, unto our first parents. So that here the whole parts of the eternal plan not only took place, but in a great measure, were laid open. *Fifthly*, It especially concerneth us to notice, that the whole of this glorious intimation, is by way of divine promise, and covenant by God to man; and hence the words run, and I will put enmity—— And, he shall bruise thy head. All which was also understood by our first Parents, and their immediate children, as is plain from *Abel's* eying the promised Messiah by faith, in his offering unto the Lord, *Heb. xi. 4.* By all which *sixthly*, It is plain, that seeing the Lord made such a gracious intimation and promise, upon his part: that he also required upon man's part, his assent unto the truth and certainty of the revelation, and his cordial consent unto that way of salvation, by a Redeemer. For the very divine intimation, and proposal of it, required no less at man's hand.

And therefore as *Abel* was accepted, as having the faith of assent and consent; so, *Cain*, upon the other hand, was rejected, for the want of it, *Heb. xi. 4.* And the Lord's words unto him, upon his dejection, are very full and remarkable to the present purpose.—— *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door, Gen. iv. 7.* As if the Lord had said. Have I not intimated the only way to acceptance with me, to wit, by looking unto and relying upon the promised seed of the woman: If thou wilt therefore take this way, and not approach me in a legal way, challenging acceptance, because of some excellency in thy person and offering, and shalt practically evidence thy faith by thy works, then thou shalt infallibly be accepted: But if thou wilt
not

not take this way of grace, accepting of this new covenant, but will betake thyself to the first covenant of works ; I tell thee plainly, that the wrath due to thy sin, is so near thee, that it is forever impending over thy head, ready to break out and destroy thee ; and thus sin lieth at the door. All which makes it most evident, that in these few words, there was contained, a most compleat & formal covenant, quite different from the first, in which,

God, 1. clearly distinguisheth one part of mankind from another, the seed of the woman, from the seed of the serpent : So that the covenant is not now universal, respecting all mankind as before. 2dly, He stateth a lasting and irreconcilable enmity and war betwixt the two foresaid parties, that so there may be access, for a special distinguishing love and power to appear in favour of the one against the other. 3dly, Promiseth the incarnation of the Son of God, as preparatory for his suffering. 4thly, Engageth this seed of the woman, whose heel the serpent shall bruise, shall at length intirely destroy the serpent, in all his power against the seed of the woman. 5thly, Requireth in point of duty, man's assent and consent unto this new method of salvation, as the condition on his part ; man being bound thereto, by the very divine proposal of it. But withal, 6thly, Knowing the elect to be equally dead to sin with others (*Eph. ii. 1.*) Therefore, there must certainly be under the foresaid promises, a virtual promise of working this faith in them, in order to the receiving the blessings purchased by the promised Redeemer : Otherwise all the foresaid promises, shall be but vain words, and issue in nothing, which can never be supposed with respect to any divine proposals or projects, contrived by God, in relation to the salvation of men. From all which,

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The sum of this new gospel covenant, may be reduc'd to the following articles. 1. God from love to his elect, giveth his Son to them to become their redeemer, *John* iii. 16 2dly, The Son from love consents, *Psal* 40. 6 7. 3dly, The Son thus given and consenting, is constituted the head of all the elect, so that he now standeth in their law-room and place, *Rom.* v. 12 to the end. 4thly, Upon this the whole of the elects sin, original and actual, is imputed to him, (*Isai.* liii. 6.) For which he fully satisfieth divine justice, *John* 19. 30 5thly, Upon this imputation of the elects sin to Christ, and his compleat satisfaction, for the same; his perfect righteousness arising from the active & passive obedience of the, glorious God-man, is imputed to them 2 *Cor.* v. 21.

Upon all which, 6thly, to prepare the elect, for the foresaid imputation, God engageth to bestow saving knowledge upon them, whereby they are enabled to discern a superlative glory in Christ's person, a suitable fulness in his offices, together with their absolute need of him in them all: Which saving powerful instruction, is to issue in a cordial embracing of him, their souls being determined thereby, to desire, choose and rely upon him for salvation in all his offices, *John* vi. 45. 7thly, Upon this, actual embracing of him, his perfect righteousness being actually imputed to them, they from that hour are justified, adopted, and gradually more and more sanctified; till the good work begun, come to be perfected, and grace issue in glory, *Isai.* li. 3. 1. *John* i. 6. And thus we may see the great import of the new and excellent covenant of grace.

The great differences and glorious advantages of this new gospel covenant, above the first covenant of works, are manifold. Among others these following, deserve observation and praise. As 1.

The Almighty, self-sufficient, unchangeable Emanuel; the wonderful person, God-man, is now placed in the room of poor finite, mutable and fallible Adam. The first covenant, had meer man for its head, whereas behold this second, hath none less than the man Christ Jesus, who is also *God over all, blessed for ever, Rom ix. 5.* So that the same difference, that is betwixt the infinite, All-sufficient independent God, and finite, dependent fallible man, is upon the matter betwixt the two covenants. *2dly*, Hence also the perfect obedience of the head of this covenant is absolutely and infallibly certain: He being in person God, and having the fulness of the God-head dwelling in him bodily; It is impossible, there can be the least failure with him: For reason it self, can never suppose the least of sinful imperfection, to be consistent with infinite holiness and perfection. So that although a few hours, at least a few days discovered great insufficiency and weakness in the first Adam; yet eternity shall never discover the least resemblance thereof in the second.

Again *3dly*, The condition in this second covenant required of the elect, is freely wrought in them by supernatural grace, *Psal. cx. 3* Whereas in the first covenant, the condition of life, depended upon man's mutable will, and his own defensible uncertain grace: So that however great the promises of temporal and eternal life were, which appertained to that covenant; yet at the same time, they all turned upon a very loose hinge. *4thly*, In this covenant all the precepts are upon the matter converted into promises: The spirit is to cause this elect people, to walk in the way of God's statutes and do them, *Ezek. xxxvi. 27*. Whereas in the first covenant, perfect, personal, perpetual obedience, without any promise of supernatural grace, for the infallible accomplishment

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ment of the same ; was required. Yea, more, the precepts in this second transaction, are not the condition of life, but only enjoyed as so many reasonable proofs of our love and gratitude to so gracious a God, *Joh xiv 15*. Yea further a sincere obedience expressed by a cordial universal respect to the divine commands, attended with serious practical aims and endeavours, is now accepted, as a return of love, *2 Cor. viii 12*. And all our short-comings and sinful mixtures in our performances, are freely pardoned, and all the spiritual wounds and decays made and influenced by our backslidings, are effectually healed, upon the account of the Lord our righteousness, *Hos xiv 4, 15*. Again, *5thly*, In this covenant (properly speaking) there is no penalty at all : The bloody sentence——*Thou shalt surely die*, hath no art nor part in this covenant of love. And for the fatherly corrections and chastisements contained therein, as the necessary, wise and proper means, for instructing, humbling and recalling foolish, ill natured and transgressing children (*Psal. lxxxix. 31, 32, 33*.) they being all really the product of great and unchangeable loving kindness ; there can never be any real penalty in them. Yea more, it is impossible, there can be any thing really vindictive or penal in this covenant of grace, so far as it concerneth the elect, without an evident reflection, upon the Lord Jesus Christ, as if either his performing the condition of life, as the elects surety, were uncertain, as in the case of the first Adam, which therefore required the annexing of a penalty : Or else, as if what Christ did in the law-room, had only in part, satisfied justice and law, but not wholly and perfectly :

And hence it is, the Apostle is so bold in his challenge, *Rom. viii. 33, 34*. Asserting, that there is not the least room left after Christ's death,

resurrection and intercession, for justice to edge in it self, in the least vindictive dispensation against this elect people. Briefly, an unbroken love dispensation, through the whole conduct of providence, in time and eternity, is infallibly secured to all truly interested in this second *Adam*, and covenant of grace, *Rom. viii. 28.* It is true, this chariot of the wood of *Lebanon* may jolt and shake in the rough ways, in the wilderness, for the provocations of the passengers therein; but still its bottom is paved with love, for all the true daughters of *Jerusalem*, *Song. iii. 9, 10.* In fine, the Almighty God is now our *Adam*; the divine all-sufficiency is now our *Grace*, and the divine immutable promise our security; So that upon the whole, this covenant issueth in nothing less than in an eternal unchangeable and absolute divine decree, and promise of everlasting life in *Christ* unto the elect; *Tit. i. 2.* *In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began.* Surely then, this covenant and every soul in it, are built upon the rock, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail. And thus,

This new covenant of grace, making the first clear display of the eternal plan, was erected and established in the garden. Man must be saved where he was lost, and the old serpent must be conquered and confounded in the field of battle. Heaven's great and important *Gazette* was now published, and the grand enemy, hath now received the fatal news, to wit, That—*The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head*: With respect to which,—*Bethlehem* shall clear them, *Mount Cavalry* shall further explain them: *Mount Olivet* shall confirm them, and the great day of the Lord, shall perfectly accomplish them.

By this time, it is now evident, that one great branch of the eternal model, to wit, the display

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ing and exalting the glory of the divine love and mercy in Christ, towards the elect, is sufficiently provided for: This new covenant, in its gradual accomplishment, being to reconcile, justify and sanctify the elect, and in a way of pure love to regulate the whole conduct and tenor of Providence towards them, in time and eternity; till they come to be all presented without spot or wrinkle, and all of them become beloved disciples, lying in Christ's bosom, as at the fountain head; instead of sitting any more among the small and shallow streams, *2 Theff. 4. 17, 18.*

The only question then, now remaining is, What becometh of the other branch of the eternal plan, relative to the glory of *justice*? And whether or not, this first covenant of works be absolutely gone, and of no more use to the divine providence, in accomplishing the aforesaid eternal project.

To clear which, let us consider, that the divine wisdom, in the conduct of Providence, having now erected two covenants, and that so very early between God and man, and withal a third never being to be erected; certainly then, these two covenants, must look very far in their designs and ends. In reflecting on which procedure, it cannot escape our observation, that the world had not as yet seen many days, and man yet fewer; yea more, that none of mankind did as yet exist, save our first parents alone, when both these covenants, of works and of grace, were actually constituted and erected: All which giveth ground to believe, that these two covenants must certainly be the two grand rules designed by the Deity, for regulating the whole subsequent procedure of divine Providence, in time and eternity, towards mankind. They are so quickly reared up, before ever man begins to multiply on the face of the earth; and none other as a third different from

them, being ever so much as once to be proposed by God. Certainly then, they must concern all mankind as the two great foundations, upon which justice and mercy were to rear up their several performances in all ages, towards their respective objects among men, *Psal.* 11. 4.

Briefly, the nature of the two covenants clearly determineth so much ; for the one being of works and broken ; admitting neither a mediator, nor allowing any room for, nor regard unto repentance, and withal being made with all mankind ; it is evident, that all who will not fly from the curse of this covenant, to the grace of the other, fall infallibly and inevitably into the hands of justice, *Gal.* 3. 10. Yea, God must cease to be holy, just and true ; otherways every soul must be cursed, that abideth within this covenant, despising the offer of the other. Again, the other covenant being of grace, and founded upon the divine all-sufficiency and fulness, in the person of Christ, as head of the elect, who can neither fail in performing the condition on his part as mediator, nor in working the condition in his elect, required on their part ; And on the other hand, God being a God of truth, the covenant on his part must infallibly be sure and everlasting, and such as cannot be broken ; and consequently the divine love, and mercy cannot fail to be highly glorified on the part of the guilty, polluted and impotent elect, interested in this covenant, *Ezek.* 16. 5, 6. *Rev.* 1. 5,

Again, if upon this, we trace the method observed by the all-wise divine providence, towards the improvement of the aforesaid two covenants ; we shall find, that these two general heads, are agreed upon, to wit, That seeing the two attributes of justice and mercy to be glorified by the two foresaid covenants, are the glorious perfections of one

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one and the same deity, in exalting of which, he is greatly concerned, that therefore, 1st. The objects of these two covenants shall be provided by providence: Accordingly upon the fall, we find mankind very quickly through the divine blessing, replenishing the earth, *Gen. 5 chap.* Again, 2^{dly}. That these two covenants, arising from two springs in the same fountain, should not therefore run cross, but mutually advance one another.

Accordingly, we find the very first family of the human race, divided betwixt these two covenants; mercy having its *Abel* and *Seth*, and justice its *Cain*. And if mercy got the first fruits of mankind, to wit our first parents, behold quickly, how deeply justice shared (in all probability) amongst the wicked and impenitent Old World. And again, when justice had seemed to monopolize, the whole of the human race to itself; Behold on the other hand, mercy hath a righteous *Noah* provided, to become as it were a second *Adam*. Again, if justice, cut off the barren rebellious church of the *Jews*, this must make way for exalting of mercy among the *Gentiles*: And when justice hath for a set time, triumphed over the *Jews*, it must again give access to mercy in its turn to ascend the throne. Briefly, The impossible condition of the former covenant, together with its alarming curse, is to lead men in, unto the grace and mercy of the latter; As on the other hand, in recompence, the latter by its gracious offers, importunate invitations and exhortations, (when not embraced) is to send back the despisers, seven times more the children of justice and wrath, than they were before, *Heb. 2 3. Matth. 10. 15.*

More particularly to survey the procedure of providence in improving these two covenants of works and of grace, now established for accomplishing the designed glory of justice and mercy

among the children of men ; let us consider them separately.

And 1st. As to the improvement made by providence of the broken covenant of works, it ought to be minded, that however this first covenant of works be taken down, and broken in pieces, as a covenant of life, it admitting of no mediator to repair its breach ; sin and death being peremptorily connected therein, *Gen. 2. 17*. So that no soul among *Adam's* race, can possibly come to life by it ; our very imputed guilt from *Adam*, abstract from our inherent corruption, being inconsistent with perfect obedience ; the condition of the said covenant : Yet it should also be considered, that even this broken and shipwrecked covenant, is most wisely improved by God in its remains.

The two great remaining parts of which are,

1. Its law, the rule of man's obedience : For clearing of which, we would consider that abstract from the special exploratory or trying precept, relative to the forbidden fruit ; the moral law in its ten great commands, was originally written upon man's heart, as the perfect standing rule of human obedience in that covenant : As is demonstrable, from the indelible remains thereof universally amongst mankind even to this day. Again 2^{dly}, The other great remain of that broken covenant, is its penalty or terrible threatening, which was most justly annexed unto it, to wit, death, natural, spiritual, and eternal, *Gen. 2. 17*.

Upon all which,

Let us a little view the improvement made by divine providence of both those remains, towards the accomplishing the eternal plan : And upon a very brief inquiry, we shall find a most remarkable fourfold improvement made thereof. As 1. The very remaining impressions of the foresaid law, upon

on the natural conscience of all men, though but dim and faint, in respect of the original inscription, yet even till this day, they are of great use to the divine providence in governing the world : Because by these natural impressions of moral good and evil, the foundation of all morality amongst corrupt mankind is laid. It is from these impressions in the natural conscience, that all the good and wholesome laws to be found amongst the several nations and kingdoms of the earth, together with their just sanctions, have in a great measure sprung. It is also by them that societies are united, and the peace preserved. So that conscience under God, ruleth and influenceth the world more, (as to any good done therein) than all the swords and scepters that are swayed in it, *Rom. 2. 14. 2dly*, Where this moral law in the visible church, is clearly and explicitly recorded and revealed ; the spirit of God along with conscience, exciting men on the one hand to obey it, and on the other hand, convincing men of the breaches of it, and then applying the threatening of the foresaid covenant, men as by a school-master or pedagogue (*Gal. 3. 24*) are led to seek out for a way to get the said law fulfilled, in order to their escaping the foresaid curse. Thus *Paul* upon a particular and powerful reflection on this covenant, in its law and curse, was presently condemned in himself, humbled and so way made for his accepting of Christ, in the other covenant, *Rom 7. 9. ———* For when the commandment came, sin revived and I died : Which is another great use made by God, of this broken covenant of works.

Again *3dly*, The moral law, in its very nature, being a perfect system of positive commands, enjoying moral good, and of negative precepts prohibiting moral evil : It is impossible, but it should continue as the eternal standing obligatory rule

of man's obedience to God, to the end of the world : For however, the corruption of our nature, hath now made it impossible for this law, as a covenant of works to bring us to life ; *Rom. 8. 3.* Yet still God being essentially and necessarily holy, and the foresaid law being a perfect compend of moral good and evil ; (which remain unchangeable in their nature) it can never cease under any covenant, to be the rule of man's obedience. And hence it is, that many years, after this first covenant was broken, we find the Lord, at *Mount Sinai*, writing with his own finger, these ten great words, promulgating the same with great majesty to the Jewish church as the standing rule of their obedience. All which is the more remarkable, that even at that time, the covenant which God made with them, (however legal terrible and majestic, it was in its form, because of a stiff-necked people) yet it was really and substantially the covenant of grace, as appears (*Exod. 24. 8, 9, 10.*) by the nobles and elders, and body of the people, their being sprinkled with blood (pointing out the true blood of sprinkling) and their being thereupon admitted to nearness and communion with God. Briefly, as God, a little after the breach of this first covenant, told *Cain*, that there was still a standing moral law, *Gen. 4. 7.* Enjoining good, and prohibiting evil ; so from that time, if we trace the whole precepts, delivered in the old or new testament, for regulating the conversation ; we shall still find, they are all founded upon this first and lasting rule of the moral law : Upon the sum of which, all the law and the prophets do hing, *Matth. 23. 40. v.* In fine, our Lord was positive, that he came not to destroy the law, but to establish and fulfil it, *Matth. 45. 17.*

Upon all which, Let us consider 4^{thly}. That
this

this moral law, continuing to stand, as the only rule of man's obedience : It thereby fairly makes way for the glory of justice, upon the impenitent transgressor thereof, both in time and eternity. For 1. Its remains on the natural conscience of persons without the church, clearly makes way for God's condemning them, for not hearkning to their consciences ; more especially, seeing they might have been far more moral, even by the fore-said influence of the accusings and excusings of conscience ; together with the instructive, inviting, and obliging daily conduct of divine providence towards them, had they duly improved the same ; *Rom. 2. 15. Act. 14. 17.* 2dly, This law being clearly proclaimed to all within the church ; when any, thereupon, continues still to sin impenitently, in the face of such great light (having Thus faith the Lord. as to sin and duty, for ever sounding in their ear) it cannot fail greatly to make way for the glory of justice upon them. Briefly, All such persons, being the servant knowing his master's will, and yet not doing it, they cannot escape being beaten with double stripes, *Luke 12. 47.*

In sum, the law and the penalty of the first covenant, will in the day of judgment, perform all that's requisite, for the glorifying of justice. The first as the great rule, lying before the omniscient judge, will effectually determine the quality of the hearts and lives of all unregenerate, impenitent sinners, from the child that cried bald-head ; unto *Judas* that betrayed Christ. The second, to wit, the penalty, requiring in that great day, that seeing death natural hath been already undergone, that now death spiritual and eternal, in their full extent, may according to the threatening be also inflicted, and that there may be no getting out, till the (impossible) payment of the last

last mite, *Luke* 12. 39. And thus justice, shall have endless eternity to display the glory of its perfection and power ; upon wicked impenitent sinners. Briefly, A sovereign and disobliged deity, by the breach of the first covenant, being no ways bound to make all mankind his church ; and yet far less to bestow saving grace, upon the whole members, of the true visible church amongst men : Hence glorious justice, through the corruption of men, shall evidently have vast territories to go (in triumph) over at the great day of the Lord. The Heathen, Pagan, Mahometan, Antichristian, and hypocritical parts of the world, cannot fail of making up, vast numbers falling to the share of justice : Especially seeing, whatever sovereign grace in an extraordinary way, may do as to some instances, (for the glory of its inconceivable riches and power) yet still no man, can be positive or certain, of the salvation of any without the church, *Act* 4. 12. In fine, as justice, through the great torrent of heaven-daring sins, got very early the ascendant over the old world, to display itself in the overflowing deluge, and in the dreadful flames of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* ; so it shall also put an end to time, in its terrible judgments, triumphing over *Gog* and *Magog*, with their numberless hosts, like the sand by the sea shore ; The churches last and great enemy, *Rev.* xx. 7, 8, 9.

And thus we may clearly see both parts of the eternal plan, designed for the glory of mercy and justice, greatly provided for, by the breach of this first covenant of works ; all which discovereth the improvement, made by the divine providence, of the foresaid covenant : upon which, in the next chapter, followeth the consideration, of the divine improvement of the covenant of grace.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER XII.

The covenant of grace considered and described, as it is founded in an eternal immutable decree of the divine mind and will. Four heads necessary to be discoursed, in order to the making a scriptural and rational account, of the whole of this covenant. The first is, to make account, of the gradual manifestation, of that great and first promise, made of Christ in the garden; and of the different dispensations of this covenant of grace, as under the old and new testament. The promise of the Messiah, made in the garden, is gradually set, in greater and greater light. The gradual manifestations and enlargements thereof, bear a wise proportion, unto the gradual encrease and necessities of the church, and that, whether we respect, Adam's, Abraham's or Moses's time. When in process of time, Israel became exceeding numerous, by their encrease in Egypt, and was in case to be erected, into an ecclesiastick and political body; the divine wisdom saw it then proper, to establish and promulgate this covenant of grace, in a very solemn manner. The rebellious quality, carnal disposition, and minor condition of the church, required the following method, to be observed, in the promulgation of the foresaid covenant. As 1st. That there should be some very remarkable preparatory dispensations, to dispose stout-hearted and unbelieving Israel for covenanting with God. 2dly. Upon the same reasons, the form of the dispensation of the covenant (though really at the bottom a transaction of grace) must be exceeding majestical and legal. And 3dly. In regard of their carnal sensual disposition, the tenor of the promises, must have

a deep tincture of temporal blessings : And 4thly. *The great mystery of Christ crucified, and of salvation by him, must be preached, by types and figures, obvious unto their senses, as unto children. In short, God being the holy one of Israel, he promulgates the moral law, as the everlasting rule of holiness and righteousness. And being also the gracious redeemer of his elect among them, he wisely annexeth the ceremonial law. And withall being their King and supreme governor, he subjoineth the judicial law. The church in the fulness of time, upon our Lord's incarnation, death, resurrection and ascension, being brought from her minor state and condition ; The scene was greatly changed. Behold a new dispensation of the covenant of grace is erected. The alteration made upon the dispensation, discoursed and cleared by a great many particular instances. The parallel run, betwixt the two dispensations, evidencing the advantage to be greatly ours. If they had Moses, a servant ; we have Christ the Son. If they had Aaron ; we have the person God-man. If they had the most holy place ; we have the far more glorious, third heavens, where there is no vacancy betwixt the cherubims. A rational account of the foresaid gracious change made upon the dispensation of the covenant of grace. both the honor of the mediator, and the confirmation of the three grand articles of the Christian faith, required the foresaid gracious and remarkable alteration.*

LET us proceed now to the consideration of the divine improvement of the covenant of grace. towards the accomplishing the eternal plan : Which covenant most deservedly, is much insisted upon, in the holy scriptures. The sum of all amounts to this, *That*

The gradual Manifestation of the Covenant of 243

That God, from love having given his Son to the elect, hath promised unto them eternal life, through him ; Together with all the necessary means, for accomplishing the same : And all this to the glory of his grace, Eph. i. 3, 6.

Thus our Lord in a few words, most emphatically summeth up this covenant ; in declaring that —*God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life, John. 3. 16.* And the Apostle Paul, giving an abbeviat of it, expresseth himself thus,—*In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the World began, Tit. 1. 2,*

This subject of the covenant of grace, being so fully explained, by many great men, and this short treatise having no design upon other mens labours ; The present purpose only requireth, that to keep the contexture of this discourse unbroken, I should make a scriptural and rational account of these three or four heads, relative to this covenant. As first, That some rational Account should be made of the gradual manifestation, of that great and first promise, made of Christ in the garden, and of the different dispensations of the foresaid covenant of grace, under the old and new testament ; ensuing thereupon.

Secondly, of the principal means, by which this covenant comes to be accomplished. *Thirdly*, Of the reasonableness and great condescension of the terms required, on man's part, in order unto his partaking of the eternal life promised in this covenant. *Fourthly*, To consider the consummating dispensation of providence, by the Son of God's second coming to judgment, in the Great day

day of the Lord ; as the last pencil and stroke for finishing the eternal plan.

Its true, there is another head relative to this covenant, the principal of them all, to wit, The glorious display of the divine love and mercy, which is made by this covenant towards mankind ; far above any expressions thereof to the *Angels*, and that whether the fallen apostate *Angels*, or even the holy elect *Angels* be considered : But this having been fully discoursed, in treating of the glorifying and exalting of the divine love and mercy, in the composition of the eternal model ; I shall not now come over, what was then declared : The reader having access to consult the same.

To return to the first of the foresaid heads relative to this covenant of grace, to wit, The promise of eternal life through Christ, made to the elect in the garden, Gen. 3. 15. *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman ; and between thy seed and her seed : It shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel.* This promise, in great wisdom, underwent several forms of expression and manifestation : As 1. in the garden, this promise was delivered in terms perfectly agreeable to the then present condition, necessities and fears of our first parents ; who were at that time all the church, which God had upon earth. They had now by sin, lost their strength and their glory, and had rendered themselves, and all their posterity poor, miserable slaves unto Satan ; so that he was undoubtedly by this time, greatly triumphing over them as a helpless and hopeless prey. In these low and desperate circumstances, stood our first parents ; as seeing no manner of out-gate or way for escape, and more especially to be brought about by the means of the woman ; and, yet far less expecting, that an offended God, would in any respect concern himself for that end. In this deplorable

able condition they are now trembling, expecting every moment deserved wrath and vengeance to break forth upon them ; So that the very sound of the Lord God, walking in the garden, was become terrible unto them.

Hereupon God, in the depth of wisdom, from the greatest love and mercy ; (while probably man was more than non-plussed in reflecting upon the fatal dispensation, brought about to him and his posterity by means of the woman, whom God had called an help meet for him). God I say, revealeth this covenant, under a promise of his giving man, even by means of the woman, a compleat victory over Satan ; which could not fail to assure man of a possibility and certainty of salvation, both from sin and wrath : God's engaging to destroy the destroyer, and that by a surviving redeemer, speaking fairly out a redeeming love, and a Saviour to be at hand.

Again *Secondly*, While the church was confined in a few persons, or families, as it was from *Adam* to *Abraham* ; It is evident, there was no great need, of any multiplicity of means, and therefore this promise in the garden, as discovering a Saviour, able to destroy the devil, and his works, and consequently able to reconcile, justify and sanctify sinners ; and as laying foundation for sin-offerings, and thank-offerings, mixed with faith, *Heb. xi. 4.* Together with an obligation to new obedience ; I say, considering all these, the foresaid promise did bear full proportion, unto the number and necessities of the church, for the foresaid period of time : More especially considering the revelation of the said promise, was handed down from family to family. Accordingly, we find some very Godly persons in those times, *Abel, Seth, Enos*, and no doubt, many others in their families, who as little churches, did begin (*Gen. iv. 46.*) in a more
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public and solemn manner, to call upon the name of the Lord, in all the then manifest means of grace and duties of worship and obedience. Yea further, as a token and pattern of what an all-wise and gracious God, would do in due time, when the encrease of the church should require it; They also had their Noah, as prophet and preacher of righteousness, and their *Melchizedeck*, as priest of the most high God, and King of Salem; And this as a pledge of the *Mosaical* oeconomy; but especially as types of him, who was both prophet, preacher and ark himself, and who was indeed King of *Zion*, and high priest of the church of God, *Heb. 6. 20.*

Again *Thirdly*, When the appointed time came, wherein *Abraham, Isaac. and Jacob*, were to be the three great Patriarchs of a most numerous church, whom God was resolved, in a visible manner to dwell among; making them his peculiar people, above all the nations on earth: Wisdom, then required that in proportion, this promise should be further explained and extended; and that the means of its application should be multiplied. Accordingly, over and above what God had revealed to Adam in the Garden, he greatly amplifieth, and extendeth the foresaid revelation to *Abraham, Isaas and Jacob*. And this more particular, clear and full revelation was necessary, not only in regard, *Abraham* had descended and been educated among a people absolutely estranged from God, and ignorant of this great mystery of the *Messiah*; but also to strengthen his faith, and the faith of the other two Patriarchs, who were to live as pilgrims and strangers, in the midst of unknown countries and people; and who withal were also to be exercised by God, with very trying and shaking dispensations of providence, before the promise should be accomplished. Briefly Sarah

was

was to be barren, till nature should have ground to despair ; and Isaac was to have the knife within a hair's-breadth of the sacrifice : Rebecca was also to be long barren, and when fruitful, the children were to threaten to destroy one another : *Jacob* and his *All*, was to be twice in eminent hazard from *Laban*, and from *Esau*.—All which great trials required some special particular tokens from God, of his making his new covenant of grace with them, in a more full and explicit way and manner, than what he had done with Adam in the garden.

Accordingly, the Lord declared to Abraham, that he would, 1st. Multiply his seed like the sand by the sea-shore. 2^{dly}, That the promised *Messiah* should by a direct line, descend from him. 3^{dly}, That in this promised seed, God would bless all the nations of the earth ; meaning the elect among all tongues, people and nations, *Rev. v. 9.* 4^{thly}, That he would adopt his multiplied seed for his peculiar church and people ; and thereupon, 5^{thly}, As the badge and sign thereof, the Lord appointed the seal of circumcision, to be applied unto them ; towards their being declared externally and federally holy, above all other nations of the earth. And lastly, God also plainly told him, that after afflicting and humbling his posterity in Egypt, for four hundred years, that he would then deliver them, and bring them into, and plant them in the promised land.

To confirm all which ; *Abraham* having gotten a visional discovery of the conduct of providence towards his posterity, *Gen. xv. 1, 12, 13.* He is thereupon, 1. Made to view with his eyes the promised land. 2^{dly}, He is allowed to sacrifice to God, and his sacrifice by an immediate sign from heaven accepted. 3^{dly}, He himself greatly prospered, and that both spiritually and temporally. 4^{thly}, As a pledge of his seed's overcoming their

enemies, and possessing their land, he obtains a most notable victory, over the Kings that had spoiled Sodom, *Gen. xix. 15. 16.* taking a great spoil from them. *5thly*, Upon return from the foresaid victory was met, and most remarkably, blessed by *Melchizedeck* the priest of the most high God, *Gen. xiv. 19, 20.* And that as a sure pledge of Gods blessing him, and all his true spiritual seed, through the promised *Messiah*, the true priest and King after the order of *Melchizedeck*, *Heb. vi. 20* *6thly*. As a great intimate, whom God would hide nothing from, he is acquainted with the design'd destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah; lest the terrible majesty, power and wrath appearing therein, should have damped his faith, and broken his confidence with such a great God. *7thly*, This intimation is made by God himself, appearing in human shape unto him attended with two angels, *Gen. xviii. 1, 2.* *8thly*, As a great favourite of heaven, whom God would refuse nothing; he is allowed to intercede; *Gen. xviii. 32.* Till he is ashamed to seek more: Obtaining in the issue a remarkable deliverance for his brother Lot, and his family.

The sum of all these kind intimations and promises, were graciously renewed by God, unto *Isaac* and *Jacob*, from time to time: The latter of which, *Gen. xlix. 10* God discovered unto him, the exact time of the *Messias* incarnation, and the great increase of his kingdom.—*The Sceptre (says old Jacob) shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come: And unto him shall the gathering of the people be.* By all which, considering the great knowledge and faith of those Patriarchs, together with the condescending intimacies between God (in human shape) and them; *Gen. xxxii. 24.* As also considering the extraordinary visions and dreams,

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Gen. xxiv. 12. Seeing a mystical ladder, betwixt heaven and earth; and withal, that they could not thun to see, sovereign distinguishing grace, in calling and covenanting thus with them, whose father was an *Amorite*, and mother an *Hittite*, while their brethren were pass'd by; these things I say, render it certain, that these Patriarchs, together with the church in their days, could not but understand this new covenant of grace, with a considerable measure of clearness of thought, warmth of affection, and firmness of hope.

Accordingly we find *Abraham*, at the greatest distance from the *Messias*, of all the three Patriarchs, yet seeing our Lord's day afar off, and rejoicing greatly therein, *John viii. 56.* Upon the whole; which is the point I am now concerned in; It is evident, that the manifestation of this covenant, and the revelations relative thereto, did still bear full proportion to the condition, necessities and fears of the church even from the beginning. *Abraham, Isaac* and *Jacob*, were all strangers, in the midst of their enemies, few in number and at first, but poor in possessions; and often afraid of being cut off: Accordingly the Lord having once revealed the promised seed, the *Messias*, unto them, as the spring and foundation of all their subsequent mercies; he next annex'd the promises of preservation, multiplication, conquest over their enemies, and of the promised land: pointing thereby at the true spiritual and eternal blessings, making up the great salvation. All which by faith they very well understood; and hence old dying *Jacob*, *Gen. xlix. 18.* cries out—*I have waited for thy salvation O Lord*; as if he had plainly said, however many and great mercies I have received, yet the great salvation which I principally wait for, is not yet come. But now to proceed, in opening up the gradual manifestation, of the first great promise, in the garden, let us consider that, After

After this, when the church was become most numerous, by their wonderful increase in *Egypt*, and the set time of their deliverance come ; then wisdom required, that this covenant of grace, should be in a very public and solemn manner promulgated. Yea further, the nature and condition of the church now at this time required also that the promulgation and transaction of this covenant, should be so and so qualified, in proportion unto the peculiar temper and circumstances, of the unbelieving, carnal and stubborn people, with whom God had to do. All which will be the more clear, by considering the following particulars.

As *First* ; To disengage their carnal hearts from *Egypt*, and the sensual enjoyments thereof ; the divine providence must, wisely permit their being brought very low ; so that they must cry to the Lord, under their great bondage, *Exod. iii. 7.* *2dly*, That the first appearance of the church's God, might look like himself, even like the true and living God, and so impress deeply their unbelieving minds, he accordingly most wisely makes his first solemn entry among them, in the glorious chariot of stupendious miracles. The Lord had not appeared gloriously, for much of four hundred years in the church, and therefore he must now appear like himself, that Zion may know her King.

Accordingly, from the burning inconsumable bush, unto the killing of *Egypt's* first-born ; behold what a glorious train of divine miraculous operations, in the fields of *Zoan*, and through the land of *Egypt*, did intervene ? shewing in the various progress thereof, that his kingdom and power was over all ; even from the high and mighty *Angels*, unto the smallest insects : And that in the divine hand, the most contemptible vermine, was sufficient party, for the strongest of enemies. The design of all which was, that *Israel* might know his God

to be indeed, the great true and living God, above all other gods whatsoever : And that thereupon, they might trust him, and follow him through an howling wilderness, even in the face of manifold discouragements and great opposition. And the truth is, had not that people been monsters of unbelief, their very bodily senses, were so highly entertain'd, and deeply impressed, with a variety of glorious miracles, that it might justly have been expected, that their very eyes and ears would have (if we may so speak) forced faith in them.

3dly, To preach out the mystery of the lamb slain from the foundation of the world ; and to shew them, that it was only distinguishing favor through the *Messias*, and nothing meritorious in them, that had procured the great deliverance wrought for them : The ordinance of the *passover* is instituted, and that before ever they march one foot out of *Egypt* : And thereupon are appointed to mark all the posts of their doors with the blood of the paschal Lamb ; with certification, that the destroying *Angel* would infallibly attack the house and family that should want it, *Exod. 12.*

Again, 4thly. At once to seal all the former miracles ; their being indeed from God ; and to make yet a deeper impression of his being the true and living God, with whom they had to do, and to make a further discovery of his glorious perfections ; as also to compose their spirits, from all fears of their enemies ; and by all these to prepare them for covenanting willingly with this God, as their Lord and King : I say, for accomplishing all these great ends, the children of *Israel*, in great wisdom, by the divine command, were brought the way of the *Red-sea* ; that so the Almighty power in dividing it, and bringing it so suddenly back again upon their enemies, might gloriously display, that none less than the great

first cause, was there, as not only commanding the greatest of second causes to obey him; but even to act contrary unto the fixed course, nature had placed them in. And therefore, the wind must not only ruffle the surface of the waters, but must blow the great ocean asunder. The sea must not only divide, but must stand up on heaps, and become a wall to itself, yea and that without the help of its swadling band. Proud *Pharaoh*, and his mighty host, must bend unto, and sink under the prouder waves: His stout horses, and armed chariots must drive in vain; as having their wheels knocked off. Briefly, They that would not allow poor *Israel* straw, to make their brick, must now want both time and materials to repair the least of their breaches, or smallest pin, or spoke of their wheels. And they who would not at home in *Egypt*, take warning from *Nilus* being turned into blood, must now help to dye the *Red-sea* with their own. In fine, its true, *Israel's Joseph* was dead and gone, but so was not *Israel's God* too: who still surviveth and reigneth for ever.

Again, *fifthly* When the Lord comes to covenant with them at Mount *Siani*, though really at the bottom, it was a covenant of grace: as evidently appeareth from the divine institution of the ceremonial law, after the promulgation of the moral: The first covenant of works, allowing of no mediator, nor priest; of no sacrifice nor incense; of no altar, nor mercy seat: all which were both in the tabernacle and temple. Yet upon most weighty grounds, the divine wisdom saw it necessary, that this covenant of grace, should be promulgated and dispensed in a very legal Form, *Exod. xix 16. 18.*

Accordingly to impress that obstinate rebellious people with great awe and fear: We find, 1. That the law is promulgated with a great mixture of terrible

terrible Majesty. The eye affected and astonished with dreadful smoke, flame and lightnings: The ear confounded with the awful sound of the trumpet and thunders; Yea the great and fixed Mount itself, at the same time shaking and trembling: So that stout-hearted *Israel*, was obliged to pray *Moses*, to speak in the place of God unto them; *Exod* xx :8 19. 2dly. The church as yet being, but just creeping out from the earth, and deeply tinged with carnality, therefore she must be encouraged and threatened to obedience by temporal motives. The land flowing with milk and honey, or fasting in the wilderness, must be the more general and explicit tenor of the promises and threatnings; of the first dispensation of the covenant: No doubt, under these temporal promises, the eye of faith amongst the elect, got some glimpse of the land that is afar off, with its spiritual and eternal blessings. *Isai* xxxii. 17. Briefly, the human terrene nature be-hooved to be gradually spiritualized, and therefore these heavenly upper springs, must be couched under the blessings of the nether: They had but just now come from a most plentiful land, and therefore a more plentiful, abounding with milk and honey, wine and oil, must be the first step of their gradation, heavenward.

3dly. The church being at present in her infant state, which age is more impressed by sense than reason, and being but very weak in knowledge, therefore by material, visible performances; spiritual mysteries, must be held forth and dispersed unto them. Accordingly by manifold kinds, of sacrifices and offerings; the people's bringing them to God, and the priests offering them up, and sprinkling the people with the blood, together with God's accepting them, when offered: The great mysteries of God's reconciling, justifying and sanctifying

first cause, was there, as not only commanding the greatest of second causes to obey him ; but even to act contrary unto the fixed course, nature had placed them in. And therefore, the wind must not only ruffle the surface of the waters, but must blow the great ocean asunder. The sea must not only divide, but must stand up on heaps, and become a wall to itself, yea and that without the help of its swadling band. Proud *Pharaoh*, and his mighty host, must bend unto, and sink under the prouder waves : His stout horses, and armed chariots must drive in vain ; as having their wheels knocked off. Briefly, They that would not allow poor *Israel* straw, to make their brick, must now want both time and materials to repair the least of their breaches, or smallest pin, or spoke of their wheels. And they who would not at home in *Egypt*, take warning from *Nilus* being turned into blood, must now help to dye the *Red-sea* with their own. In fine, its true, *Israel's Joseph* was dead and gone, but so was not *Israel's God* too : who still surviveth and reigneth for ever.

Again, *fifthly* When the Lord comes to covenant with them at Mount *Siani*, though really at the bottom, it was a covenant of grace : as evidently appeareth from the divine institution of the ceremonial law, after the promulgation of the moral : The first covenant of works, allowing of no mediator, nor priest ; of no sacrifice nor incense ; of no altar, nor mercy seat : all which were both in the tabernacle and temple. Yet upon most weighty grounds, the divine wisdom saw it necessary, that this covenant of grace, should be promulgated and dispensed in a very legal Form, *Exod. xix 16. 18.*

Accordingly to impress that obstinate rebellious people with great awe and fear : We find, 1. That the law is promulgated with a great mixture of terrible

terrible Majesty. The eye affected and astonished with dreadful smoke, flame and lightnings : The ear confounded with the awful sound of the trumpet and thunders ; Yea the great and fixed Mount itself, at the same time shaking and trembling : So that stout-hearted *Israel*, was obliged to pray *Moses*, to speak in the place of God unto them ; *Exod. xx. 18. 19.* 2dly. The church as yet being, but just creeping out from the earth, and deeply tainted with carnality, therefore she must be encouraged and threatened to obedience by temporal motives. The land flowing with milk and honey, or falling in the wilderness, must be the more general and explicit tenor of the promises and threatnings, of the first dispensation of the covenant : No doubt, under these temporal promises, the eye of faith amongst the elect, got some glimpse of the land that is afar off, with its spiritual and eternal blessings. *Isai. xxxii. 17.* Briefly, the human terrene nature be-hooved to be gradually spiritualized, and therefore these heavenly upper springs, must be couched under the blessings of the nether : They had but just now come from a most plentiful land, and therefore a more plentiful, abounding with milk and honey, wine and oil, must be the first step of their gradation, heavenward.

3dly. The church being at present in her infant state, which age is more impressed by sense than reason, and being but very weak in knowledge, therefore by material, visible performances ; spiritual mysteries, must be held forth and dispersed unto them. Accordingly by manifold kinds, of sacrifices and offerings ; the people's bringing them to God, and the priests offering them up, and sprinkling the people with the blood, together with God's accepting them, when offered : The great mysteries of God's reconciling, justifying and sanctifying

tifying, believing penitent sinners, through Jesus Christ (the great and only reconciling sacrifice) was preached unto them. *4thly.* They being a people to be surrounded with idolatrous nations, most prodigal and pompuous, in their manner of worshipping their false Gods, therefore, they must have a most glorious tabernacle and temple, a most stately high-priest, richly adorned : They must have their lights, perfumes, musick, sacrifices and incense, that being so nobly entertained at home, they should lie under no temptation from curiosity, otherways to go a whoring after false Gods abroad.

5thly. As on the one hand, the rebellious temper of this people required very legal phrases to be used in transacting with them, such as, — *do and live, Levit. xviii. 5.* So still on the other hand, to hold out, that it was really a dispensation of grace, and that none could come to the enjoyment of the eternal life promised in it, by the most personal obedience of their own, but only by the obedience and death of the Messiah, therefore at the close of the promulgation, sacrifices are slain, and offerings made unto God, and all the people sprinkled with the blood, which *Moses* told them, was the blood of the Covenant : meaning, that by the death of the Lord *Jesus Christ*, the true Lamb of God, the great blessings promised, in that covenant, could only be obtained, *Exod. xxiv. 5, 6, 7, 8.*

In sum, to clear how rational the scriptural account of this dispensation of the covenant, at Mount *Sinai* was ; let us consider that God having now, made choice of a people, for his church and peculiar kingdom, and that in a public and solemn way and manner : He 1. As the holy one of *Israel*, promulgated the moral law, as the everlasting rule of holiness and righteousness. *2dly.* As the gracious redeemer of his elect among that people, he most wisely annexeth the ceremonial law, for the point-
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ing out unto them, the true and great sacrifice of his Son, for taking away the sins of the world.

3dly. Having now separated *Israel* from all other nations, and erected them into a politic body and kingdom by themselves ; he, as their king and governor, subjoineth the judicial law, (adjusted in many things, to their peculiar temper and disposition) that so they might be at no loss, but rather excel all other nations about them, as to good and wholesome laws and constitutions. And thus God most wisely at once proclaimeth the rule of the church's obedience : The grand mystery of salvation through Christ crucified, together with the proper & necessary rules, for the church's external order, peace and prosperity, considered as a body politic.

In fine, considering God was resolved to have a visible church among the *Jews*, and thereafter among the *Gentiles*, which was to continue to the end of the world : It is evident, that it was most necessary and proper, that the memory and authority of the original law of the human nature, which had been broken in the garden, and much forgotten since that time, should be again, most solemnly revived and proclaimed : That so the visible church in all ages might read, fear, and obey ; and thereby, both in point of true internal holiness, and external morality, might excel all the world round about them, to the praise and glory of her extraordinary head and king, the thrice holy God. And again, seeing God was also resolved, to have within this visible church, an invisible peculiar people, designed to be made perfect in holiness and happiness, it was no less necessary, that the new and living way unto grace and glory, through a crucified saviour, should be manifested to them, to the eternal praise, of the riches of his grace and mercy in Christ Jesus.

And thus the dispensation of the covenant of
grace

grace continued from *Moses* to *Malachy* under much of a *legal form* ; it being preached by a wise mixture of legal sermons, pressing the moral law with severe threatenings upon the transgressors, together with interlined prophecies, types and shadows of the *Messias* ; and great promises of manifold blessings through him, to the believing, humble and obedient soul. Some indeed of the prophets (*Isai* liii) were more full and particular ; upon the great subject of the covenant of grace ; thereby to prove the eternity and certainty of that covenant ; even under the old testament : But generally speaking, all the prophets preached the covenant of grace, in their day, after the fore-said manner, as being a method exceedingly adjusted to the obstinate temper and weak capacity of the Jewish church. Briefly, the church as yet was minor, and therefore her instruction must be by types and shadows, suitable to the weakness of her understanding, and as a pupil, must by her pedagogues, be kept under the awe and influence of severe threatenings and discipline, for restraining from extravagancies : *Gal. iv* 1, 2, 3.

But when the fulness of time was come for the church being brought out from this her minor state and condition, to wit, upon our Lord's incarnation, death, resurrection and ascension : Behold then in great wisdom, the scene was wonderfully changed : God proceeding to make great alterations upon the manner of the dispensation of the covenant of grace, dispensing it with far more of love, light, life and power, unto the party principally concerned therein. For first, the long promised seed of the woman, the mediator of the fore-said covenant, was now at once preached to the ear, and made visible to the eye ; so that his Ambassadors could say, and demonstrate with the Finger, — *Behold the Lamb of God*, *John* i. 36. 2als. The old tabernacle and temple, were pulled down

down to pieces; the Aaronic priesthood, together with the long train of sacrifices, are all discarded, and that most justly; upon our Lord's having offered upon earth the great sacrifice of himself, the substance and soul of all the proceeding; and thereafter entering the third heavens, the true holy place, and appearing there, as the Lamb slain before the Throne (*Rev. v. 6*) acting in all respects the part of the great high priest of the church of God. 3dly. Thereupon the great depth and Fountain of electing divine love in Christ, being now to break open, (fulfilling that Part of the Angels Song. (*Luke ii. 14*) — *Peace on earth, and good will towards men.* Accordingly God most wonderfully, with an Almighty outstretched arm, enlargeth the territories of the church, calling in the Gentile world, so that of a sudden, the children of the barren, are more than the children of the married Wife, *Isai. liv. 1.*

Again 4thly. The church's children being thus greatly multiplied, the breasts of the gospel were thereupon in proportion exceedingly replenished; so that extraordinary effusions of the gifts, graces and consolations of the holy Ghost, are let out upon the church, and that both in her ministry and members, as is evident in the history of the Acts of the Apostles. Yea sometimes we find no less recorded, than that great grace was upon them all, *Acts iv. 33.* 5thly. Behold now also the Offers of Christ and the great salvation, are delivered in the plainest and fullest terms; such as, *That all things are ready, come unto the marriage. Matth. xxii. 4.* And *whosoever will, let him come, and take the water of life freely, Rev. xxii. 17.* 7thly. The Ambassadors of Christ, are commanded now, not only simply to preach the great salvation, but also to compel sinners to come in, *Luke xiv. 23.* They are not only to offer Christ, and repeat

repeat the offers, but also to reason, importune, beseech and obtest with tears all to come unto the marriage : Yea and that even the lame, the blind and maimed, meaning those whom great sins have made greatly guilty, and loathsome in the sight of God, *Luke xiv. 21.* 7thly The terms of life required on sinners part, are far more, set in light, as to their nature, properties, causes, than what under the old testament. How plainly now, are the great doctrines of faith, repentance and new obedience, declared and opened up in the gospel ? With how much of light and evidence, is the great duty of repentance treated of in that remarkable parable of the prodigal son : *Luke xv.* from the 17 v. and downwards : As also how fully are all the properties of sincere repentance declared by the Apostle ? *2 Cor. vii. 11.* And as for its author and principal efficient cause, how particularly, are we directed unto the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Prince exalted. *Acts v. 31.* To give repentance and remission of sins ?

Again as to faith, how clearly and fully doth the Apostle preach the same unto the Jailor of old ? *Acts xvi. 31.* As consisting in a cordial embracing of a whole Christ, assenting unto the truth, and consenting unto the execution of all his offices : so that every attentive reader and hearer hath now under the gospel the fairest access, to examine and prove themselves if Christ be in them : And if upon trial, it be found, he is not ; Then 8thly Behold what clear opposite directions, by way of means are most plainly propounded in the gospel : Such as serious fixed thoughts : upon our natural sinful and miserable condition : serious views of the offer, fulness, and suitableness of Christ, *Psal. xlv. 10.* An ingenuous acknowledgment of our utter inability to turn ourselves, and thereupon, with all the seriousness we can attain unto ; be-
moaning

moaning our natural darkness, deadness, enmity and backwardness : crying, (as a perishing helpless man for life) that God would turn us and draw us, *Jer.* xxxi. 18. All which particulars, if complexly and duly considered, cannot but evidence the greatest of love, light and condescension, in this new and second dispensation of the covenant. For all which we are obliged unto the incarnation, death, resurrection and ascension, of the glorious mediator thereof, *Psal* lxxviii. 18, 19.

Again in the next place, if we should speak of the two grand motives, of everlasting life, and eternal death, for persuading sinners to come to God through Christ ; behold with what great plainness are they insisted upon, and improved under the gospel dispensation ? How is the certainty, dreadfulness and everlastingness of the wrath to come upon all impenitent unbelieving sinners, set in the greatest light ? So that, none allowing serious thoughts upon *Mat.* 25. 41. *2Thes.* 1. 7, 8, 9. And upon *Rev.* 20. from the 11. to the end ; but must, almost hear the very screeches, and see the terrible flames of place of the torment. And on the other hand, how are the manifold blessings of reconciliation, justification, adoption, sanctification and glorification, making up the great salvation, all most clearly opened up ? Their certainty, suitableness, great import, and eternal consequence, most plainly and convincingly declared : So that in that one chapter, *Rom.* 8. Who can but a little ponder it, and not behold heaven upon earth, in the certain application of pardon, peace, grace and glory, from God unto every soul truly in Christ ? Briefly, these two grand motives, are set in such great light now under the gospel, that *Paul* insisting a little upon them ; some unconverted persons (though absolutely void of spiritual life)

life) yet were made to tremble at the wrath to come, and others almost perswaded to be christians: As in the manifest instances of Felix and Agrippa.

And then lastly, the sacraments of the new testament; Behold how much they are adjusted in their nature, simplicity, and manner of administration unto the representation of the great spiritual mysteries, designed by them: preparing the said mysteries, for the eye of spiritual knowledge; and the mouth and hand of saving faith; as also for the groans and tears of Godly sorrow; and for the embraces of sincere love, together with the generous fruitful returns of zeal: So that it must be no less than a bewitching influence from sin and satan, that caused a misimprovement of them, *Gal. iii. 1*. In short, the dispensation of the covenant of grace, since the coming of our Lord, is come now to such great perfection, that the import of all the deep and great councils of God about man's redemption, and the substance of all the dark prophecies, promises, types and shadows, under the old testament, are now under the new, most plainly and briefly contained and summed up in the preaching of these six subsequent truths.

As *First*, That the long promised and expected Messiah; the wonderful person God-man, is now indeed come, *John i. 36*. *2dly*. That since his coming, he hath actually and fully purchased all the blessings necessary for compleating the great salvation. *Matth xxii. 4*. *3dly*. That as an infallible evidence thereof, he is highly exalted at the Fathers right hand, *Rom. viii. 34*. *4thly*. That thereupon, whosoever will, without respect to any qualification of Jew or Gentile, bond or free, rich or poor, less or more guilty; if once but truly willing of Christ, upon gospel terms, that then, they not only may, but are actually warranted and commanded to come, and drink of the waters of life freely, *Rev. xxii. 17*. *5thly*

5thly, That if any soul hath been endeavouring to come, but withal is much discouraged by an unbelieving backdrawing heart, and thereupon deeply affected with the same; that in that case, a greedy serious look for a day of power; one sincere cry from the heart,—*Lord help my unbelief*, shall be truly reckoned faith, and found to issue in salvation, *Jer. xxxi. 8, 19, 20*, Compared with *Mark ix. 24*. 6thly, That every soul, that doth actually come to God through Christ, if with the least measure of sincerity; shall in no ways be cast out, but infallibly upon their coming, shall have Christ made of God unto them, *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, John vi. 37. 1 Cor. i. 30*.

By the plain declaration of these six great truths, the covenant of grace, hath been preached ever since our Lord's coming; and will continue so to be, even unto the end. All which being considered; who then can desire, the mysteries of the kingdom, or the way to salvation, to be set in greater light? surely, God spoke a great truth, when he prophesied, That Christ should be a light unto the *Gentiles*. He arose, its true, among the *Jews*, but his meridian altitude, and glory was verily reserved for us *Gentiles*: So that now, the knowledge of the great councils and mysteries of revealed religion, which only shone (*Isai xxx. 26*.) with a moon light, in the *Jewish* horizon, is now become as the light of the sun, and that light sevenfold, in the *Gentile* world. Briefly, upon the whole, if any perish, at this spiritual noon-time of the gospel day; It must infallibly proceed, from more of enmity, than of ignorance.—Ye will not come unto Me, that ye may have life; must certainly be very much at the bottom of it, *John v. 40*.

The conclusion of all is: If the parallel be run,
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betwixt the old and new testament dispensation, of the covenant of Grace ; then behold, the difference plainly is, first if they had *Moses* the servant of God ; we have Christ the Son and heir of all things : If they had *Aaron*, as their great high priest ; a poor sinful man, needing first to sacrifice for himself ; and who was discarded before all *Israel* for his sin ; Behold we have the glorious person God-man, infinitely removed from all pollution, and who by virtue of his wonderful person : the dignity, and fulness thereof, was able by the one sacrifice of himself, to satisfy justice fully, for the whole sins of the elect world : and thereupon not only to intercede as mediator, for the applications of the whole blessings, of the great salvation ; but also to answer his own intercession, as being truly God, as well as man ; And so having a divine all-sufficiency in him, towards the becoming a priest, after the order of *Melchizedeck*, for saving to the uttermost, all them that come unto him, *Heb. xx. 7.* and *25.* compared with *Col. ii. 9.* Briefly, such is our high priest, that he must pray for and save great Aaron, and all his most holy successors in office, or else, some one golden calf or other will infallibly condemn them,

Again Secondly, If the *Jews* had their glorious temple, with the most holy place, their cherubims, mercy seat, golden altar, and much incense, where their high priest entered once a year ; behold, we have the far more glorious third heavens, that high and holy habitation, where there is no vacancy between the cherubims, but the God of infinite mercy really sitting above the mercy seat. And where the living cherubims stretch out not their dead (tho' golden) wings, over the same, but receive and perform the greatest commissions of love and mercy, unto the heirs of salvation.

And

And where in place of the useless golden altar, and smoaky incense, to him that is a spirit ; We have the divine nature of the glorious mediator, together with the merit and virtue of his compleat satisfaction : Upon the account of which, he can not only appear once ; but all the year over, and with the greatest holy boldness, express himself, in no less terms than—*Father, I will, that they whom thou hast given me, may be with me, where I am, John xvii 24.*

And then *Thirdly*. If they had their ceremonial sprinklings, and washings, with the useless bunch of hyssop, and course blood of bulls and goats : behold now in stead of these, how we enjoy the immediate applications and operations of the holy Ghost, upon the hearts of believers, *1 Cor. iii. 16. 17.* And again, if they had their great Prophets, who at best were but ear-witnesses, at the greatest distance of the glorious Messiah, and the great salvation to be wrought by him : And who thereupon, as the Apostle *Peter* testifieth (*1 Peter i. 10. 11.*) were all of them at most but students in gospel divinity : behold we have the great Apostles, the eye witnesses, who not only saw the man Christ, but also beheld his glory (*John i. 14.*) as of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth : And who also were his great intimates and favourites for many years, here upon the earth, receiving fully the great and deep counsels about redemption, immediately from the original breast, in which they had been written from eternity, *Pro. viii. 23. Psal. xl. 8.*

Thus in these few instances, with many other particulars, which might be named, relative to the difference of our sacraments, spirituality of worship, fuller influences of converting, edifying and comforting grace, together with far more of a spirit of adoption : I say by all these, How far

the advantage is ours, under the new testament, above the church under the old, who can sufficiently declare? More especially considering, That the foresaid difference can only be best determined, by reflecting how far Christ excelleth *Moses*, and darkneth *Aaron*; and how far the substance is preferable to all shadows. And therefore upon the whole, how true is it, That the terrible and shadowy law was given by *Moses*, but that grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, *John* i. 17.

This gracious change, upon the dispensation of the covenant of grace upon our Lord's incarnation, was certainly made upon most wise and weighty grounds: As 1. The honour of our Lord required so much; seeing the elect were chosen in him, and his blood the great price of our redemption; it was highly reasonable, that the clearer dispensation of the covenant of grace, and the fuller out-lettings of the blessings thereof, should be reserved, until his incarnation, death, resurrection and ascension: That so the dependence of those blessings upon him, as streams from the fountain might be proclaimed. And therefore, he must ascend on high, (*Psal.* lxxviii. 18.) Before the plentiful effusion of the gifts and graces of this covenant, be allowed upon the church 2^{dly}. The deferring this clearer and more glorious dispensation of the covenant, and the more generous and bountiful effusions of its blessings, until the time of our Lord's incarnation, death and resurrection; was most necessary, for attesting and confirming the three grand articles of revealed religion, and the christian faith, to wit, *First*, The reality; And *secondly*, The meritoriousness; And *thirdly*, The actual acceptance of Christ's satisfaction, made to God by his obedience unto death in behalf of the elect: For certain it is,

is, That no procedure of divine providence, could possibly confirm these foresaid great truths, more than the miraculous effusion of the holy Ghost, in extraordinary gifts and measures of grace, immediately upon our Lord's ascension, (*Acts 2*) together with the continued, plentiful, powerful influences of the same, towards the conversion of some thousands at once, and the remarkable sanctification and establishment of the churches thereupon. More especially, our Lord having expressly, foretold (*John xvi. 7.*) *That if he did not go, the holy Ghost would not thus come; But if he did, that then he would send him.* All which amounts to such a solid proof, founded upon such undeniable matters of fact, that reason itself must cry out, That beyond all controversy, Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah; and that the offering up of himself, must have infallibly been a most acceptable sacrifice to God; considering that such extraordinary gifts and accomplishments for the church's ministry, and such great measures of grace for her members, were the immediate product and consequences thereof. Briefly, The feast of fat things, of marrow, and of wine, on the lees well refin'd, from all ceremonies, types and shadows, (*Isa. xxv 6*) was for this end wisely reserv'd to the last, even till our Lord's incarnation, That so the gospel church, in a way of glorious triumph and praise, might, at our Lord's coming cry out, as in the same context, *Isai xxv 9* — *Lo! this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us.* And thus now we have heard of the first general head, relative to the gradual manifestation of the promise made in the garden, and the different dispensations of the covenant of grace, ensuing thereupon.

C H A P T E R XIII.

The means by which the great salvation of the covenant of grace, comes to be applied to all interested therein, are three in number Abstract from the great fundamentals of our Lord's incarnation, death, resurrection and ascension; There is, First, Our Lord's appearing at court above, and acting the part of a high-priest, after the order of Melchizedeck. The second is, The ministerial dispensation of the word, sacraments and prayer, in the church here below. The third is, The Almighty internal saving operations of the holy Ghost in beginning, carrying on and perfecting the elect's salvation, in the use of the foresaid external means. By virtue of the first, our Lord gets the book with the seven seals, (Rev. v. 9.) delivered unto him, as one worthy to open it : and able to execute all the great decrees and purposes therein, relative to the church ; or to the world for the church's sake. The import of the delivery of this book, unto the Lamb, considered and opened up. By our Lord's receiving this book, effectual provision is made, for removing all obstacles and lets out of the way, of the external dispensation of the covenant of grace, unto the elect of God, through all nations. As way must thus be made, for the church's plantation and situation in the world ; so also, suitable conduits, congruous unto the intelligent, rational human nature, for conveying home the spiritual blessings of the covenant, unto the souls interested therein, must next be proved. Accordingly, in great wisdom, the word, sacraments and prayer are contrived : in proportion unto the external and internal facul-

ties of the human nature. All these means, however excellent (in their own order of working) yet at most being still but means; the living and life-giving holy Ghost, as the great efficient cause, must be set on work, in order to the infusing a supernatural principle of spiritual life, into the souls of the elect. A rational account and description of this supernatural principle: By declaring first, the divine procedure, towards its infusion, and next opening up its nature, together with its manifold operations and effects, upon the inward and outward man. Considering that God once made man perfectly holy; reason itself, not only preached the possibility and probability of such a supernatural principle: but considering man to be the only creature in the whole lower world, capable of glorifying and enjoying God; It pleadeth strongly, That the deity, will certainly yet make some spiritually alive unto his glory. And if so, regeneration, must be something more than sham.

TH E second general head, relative to this new covenant to be considered, was, the means, by which the great salvation contained therein comes to be applied to the chosen generation interested in the same.

For clearing of which, not to insist upon our Lord's incarnation, public ministry, death, resurrection and ascension, as the great fundamentals of the subsequent parts of the dispensation of this covenant, *Isai* liii. 10, 11, 12. There are principally these three means, which more immediately influence the actual application of the blessings comprehended in it.

As *First*, Our Lord's appearing above at court in heaven, (where all matters relating to the church here below, do first take a turn) and acting there the part of a high priest, after the order of

Melchizedeck, in behalf of his people, *Heb.* vi. 20. *2dly.* The ministerial dispensation of the word, sacraments and prayer, in Christ's name ; by authority from him, and according to divine institution, *Matth.* xxviii. 19, 20. And then, *3dly.* The Almighty, irresistible, internal operations of the holy Ghost, in beginning, carrying on, and perfecting the great and good work of the elects salvation, in the dispensation of the foresaid external means, *Psal.* cx. 2, 3. *Phil.* i. 6.

By virtue of the first, to wit, as high priest after the order of *Melchizedeck* ; our Lord is not only the church's great advocate and intercessor, having access and right to plead and will, *Jehovah*, to move all the wheels of providence, in ruling the world ; so, as this covenant, with its great blessings, age after age, may be infallibly applied unto all the elect : But is also himself the church's Head and King, as *Melchizedeck* was not only the priest of the most high God, but also king of *Salem*, (*Heb.* vii. 1.) having all power in heaven and in earth, in his own hand, for the church's sake ; *Matth.* xxviii. 18.

To open up this important truth, because of its great consequence ; let us a little consider these four heads in relation unto it. As *1st.* Our Lord, being the eternal Son of God, and thereupon having the same divine nature, power and glory with the Father. *John* x. 30. He must also necessarily have all the divine perfections needful for the exercising of the foresaid kingly power, such as infinite wisdom, power, holiness. In short, this Child born unto us, *Isai.* ix. 6. being in person, none less than the Almighty God, must certainly be every way qualified for having the government upon his shoulders. Again, *2dly.* Our Lord being he, by whom (in the Order of working) the worlds were made ; *Heb.* i. 2. Therefore as none can
have

have a greater right to govern all, so none can know better, how to behave therein : For he having created all Beings, and the whole of second causes, he must thereupon be perfectly acquainted with their Nature, influence and dependence upon one another ; even from the highest Arch-angel, unto the lowest crawling worm ; and thereupon, can certainly most easily set them all a going.

More particularly, our Lord perfectly understanding man, and what is in man (*John ii. 25.*) whether he be a hard-hearted *Pharaoh* ; or a *Lucifer* like *Nebuchadnezzar* ; or a subtle foe like *Herod* : I say, he being perfectly acquainted, with their different genius, predominant inclinations, greatest interests, their various, natural and acquired abilities, together with the several higher and lower spheres they move in, in the world : and withal, he again having their natural and rational life, absolutely in his power, *Act. xvii. 28.* It is evident how easy it must be for him, to influence and over-rule all their political actions, greater or lesser : Even from the king with the sword and sceptre upon the throne, through the whole *subordination* of inferior rulers, unto the meanest subject on the footstool. Accordingly we find our Lord expressly claiming this, as his prerogative, *That by him kings reign, and princes decree Justice, Prov. viii 15.* Again, *3dly.* Let us consider, that our Lord being God equal with the Father, he is thereupon also equally acquainted, with all the divine eternal decrees relative to time ; and, with all the greater and lesser turns, together with the times and seasons thereof, which providence is gradually to accomplish, amongst all the generations of the children of men, unto the end of the world, *Matth. xi. 27.* By all which it's obvious, how much he is fitted for being at the helm, and giving life and direction to the whole of providential dispensations.

Again

Again, 4thly. Our Lord as mediator, being the person who transacted with *Jehovah*, for the elect, and denied himself, in a state of humiliation, by vailing his glory for thirty years and upwards, in a sinful miserable world; and withal he being the person, who payed the rich and great price of his blood, for his people: And all this to bring about an eternal song of praise, to the whole perfections of the deity, in the work of redemption: I say considering these things, it is clear, that nothing could be more reasonable or congruous to the divine wisdom and justice, than that the Son (now God man) should be the person, who (of all the great Three in one) by the divine decree, and mutual consent of the adorable trinity, should have all power given him in heaven and in earth, asking to rule over the world for the church's sake: And thereupon receive dominion and power, to do with elect and reprobate, friends and foes, and the whole of their interests and concernments, as he should in the greatness of his wisdom, see most for the glory of the deity, his own exaltation and honor, the general good of the visible church, and the more special and saving good of his elect people. In fine, our Lord being both the glorious creator, and the gracious redeemer of the world, it is more than evident, that he hath the greatest claim, of all others, to all dominion and power, over all mankind, and that whether within or without the church.

Accordingly in confirmation of all these, we find (*Rev. v. 9*) our Lord declared, to be worthy to take the book, and open the seals thereof; importing plainly these two; *First*, That he is perfectly acquainted with the whole of the eternal divine counsels, which are to be accomplished in time: More especially in so far as they concern the church: It being their respect unto, and influence

fluence upon her, which principal'y brings them under his cognizance and administration as mediator. He being the head of all things, for the church's sake, *Eph. i. 22.* Accordingly in the series of the book of the revelation, we find him revealing to *John* the whole of the great remarkable dispensations, and principal hinges of the conduct of providence, towards the church, even to the end of the world : Such as, the rise and fall of *Rome*, *Heathen* and *Antichristian* : The drying up the river *Euphrates*, and the making way for the kings of the *East* ; pointing at the destruction of the *Mahometan* empire, and the conversion of the *Jews* : As also, the thousand years rest and reign, which his saints shall enjoy on earth : The great gathering of *Gog* and *Magog*, together with their ensuing destruction. His own second and glorious coming. All these, together with the interval motions of the wheels of providence, influencing those greater events, are plainly foretold in the prophecies of the foresaid book. And so far as time hath yet run, it must be owned, that in respect of infallible accomplishment, *John* the divine wrote more like an historian, than a prophet.

Again, to clear yet further, our Lord's great fitness for his high dominion and power, in so far as it concerneth the church, and more especially his elect people therein ; we shall find upon a little serious reflection, that he perfectly knows, 1. Their certain number, in all ages and places, *2 Tim. ii. 19.* So that nothing can disguise them : Neither their dying in their infancy with *Abijah*, *1 King. xv. 13.* Nor their continuing long in *satan's* camp, with *Manassah* and *Paul*. Yea, nor their going on in the broad way, till within, (as it were) one hour of Hell, as in the instance of the penitent thief upon the cross. Again, *2dly.* He no less knows the decreed and
set

set time for their conversion: Accordingly we find, that he must needs (*John* iv. 4.) go through *Samaria*, to come up with the poor sinner at the well, in order to the giving her living water. Hence also he could inform *Peter*, long before it came to pass, of the great gospel lake of souls, in which he was to become a fisher of men, *Matth.* iv. 19. compared with *Acts* 2. 41. And then 3dly. He is also acquainted with their decreed station and calling, in which they are to serve God in their generation; and hence he could tell the prophet *Jeremiah*, 1 *Ch.* v. that, before he had formed him in the Belly, he knew him, and had ordained him a prophet unto the nations.

Briefly, He foreknoweth their decreed work, difficulties, comforts and number of their days; so that he can tell *Moses*, that he was (*Exod* xxxiii. 14) to lead the children of *Israel*, unto the borders of the promised land, and that then he would give him rest. And hence, he could also inform *Paul*, that he must suffer yet many things for his name, and that bonds and afflictions did abide him in every city, *Acts* xx. 22. 23. As he likewise formerly had foretold unto *Hezekiah*, the addition of fifteen years unto his life. Upon the whole, the church cannot desire her Head to be more upon the eternal counsels of the Deity, that what he is, with respect to the whole of the events to be accomplished in time. By all which, it is evident, how much he is fitted for sympathizing with them, under all their tryals, and perfecting what concerneth them, *Psal.* cxxxviii. 8.

Secondly. This delivering of the book to the Lamb, imports *Jehovah's* committing the execution of all the foresaid decrees to the Son, as King of *Zion*: And hence he hath that great motto writ upon his vesture, *Rev.* xix. 16. *Lord of Lords, and King of Kings.* In fine, he being the world's maker

maker and church's husband, he must certainly be worthy to take the aforesaid book of the divine decrees, and open the same. And having opened, to sit upon the throne, influencing and over-ruling all second causes, according to the eternal model contained therein : More especially, the said plan, being perfectly calculated for the glory of the deity, the honor of the mediator, the salvation of the elect, and the rendering the remaining impenitent wicked world altogether inexcusable, to the praise of glorious justice.

To bring all this home, we may hence clearly see, how way hath been made, and shall be, to the end of the world, for the external dispensation of the gospel, its publishing this covenant of grace, and for the plantings and transplantations of the visible church, from time to time, and from place to place. Our Lord, having seated himself on the throne, as King by virtue of the eternal decree, *Psal. ii. 7. 8.* And having had the whole of second causes, animate and inanimate, and absolutely depending upon him (*Col. i. 17.*) And thereupon entirely at his disposal; and that both before and since his incarnation; he accordingly from time to time, hath made all lets and obstacles to give way before his church and gospel. Hence *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*, the *Red-Sea* and *Jordan*, *Canaan* with its mighty Kings; its walled cities, and more terrible *Anakims*; *Sennacherib* with his numberless host; *Nebuchadnezzar's* aspiring pride, *Ahasuerus's* irrevocable decree, must all fly before his face. Yea, the four great and high monarchies, *Babylonian*, *Persian*, *Grecian*, and *Roman*, must all become as plains before him. Yea which is yet more glorious and wonderful.

Behold how the far greater and stronger pillars and bars of gross ignorance, idolatry, superstition and vain philosophy, eloquence, ambition, luxury and

and all manner of immoralities ; all founding and establishing satan's kingdom, universally over the Gentile world : Behold, I say, how quickly all these were made to shake and give way before a poor tent-maker ; and all because of his going forth (in his preaching the glorious gospel) in the name and authority of this great King of Zion, who sits upon the white horse, *Rev. v. 2.* Conquering and to conquer. All which great performances, done in the face of the greatest opposition ; evidently proclaim, what this prince of the kings of the earth can do, and what infallibly in due time he will do for his church.

Briefly, He hath already, as was of old prophesied of him, *Psal. lxx. 6* *Judged among the heathen, and filled the places with dead bodies, and hath wounded the heads over many countries.* And therefore, in the fear of this great King and Lord of hosts, let all earth-worms from the highest to the lowest, who are conscious to themselves, of their opposing the pure dispensation of the gospel, whether in kingdoms, countries, or congregations, take warning, and kiss the Son, lest he be angry ; for if once his wrath be but kindled a little, blessed are they that trust in him, *Psal. ii. 12* In fine, he both must and will rule, till all his enemies be made his footstool, *Psal. cx. 1.*

And thus we now see effectual provision made for the external dispensation of the covenant of grace, to wit, by an Almighty, irresistible, over-ruling conduct of providence, influenced by the Lord Jesus Christ, as he upon whose shoulders the government is. What is next wanting, is the providing of suitable conduits, for conveying the spiritual blessings of this covenant, home unto the souls of the elect of God : Who being to be drawn with the cords of a man ; The means must therefore

therefore be congruous unto the spiritual, intelligent, rational nature of the human soul.

Accordingly, The Lord in great wisdom hath prepared the word, sacraments and prayer. Man is indeed by nature, absolutely dead in sin, but yet the intelligent, rational life in part still remaineth with him. The fall did indeed rob him intirely of spiritual life, but yet did not convert him into stock or stone; and therefore, it is still most congruous and suitable, that he should be dealt with accordingly. And hence the all-wise and great Prophet, hath prepared the word, that by its instructions, it may address the human mind, preaching to man his sinfulness, great misery and inability to recover himself; together with the new and living way unto everlasting life, by faith in Jesus Christ. And that by its offers of Christ, and its promises of peace and pardon, grace and glory, it might invite and importune the will. And further, in regard fallen man is exceeding dull and indifferent, yea stupid, as to things spiritual, therefore in great wisdom, the word is also furnished with its threatnings, of temporal, spiritual and eternal judgments, in case of impenitency and unbelief; that so conscience (when the law cometh with power) may first awaken itself, and next influence both the mind and the will, to attend more closely and seriously, unto the concerning instructions, and great offers of the gospel: *Mark xvi. 16. Act. ii. 36, 37.* And then finally, to quicken, and set all the more home; oftentimes an all-wise providence interlineth some speaking and touching dispensations, which tells the sinner with a witness, that he is no party for the great God, and that to make peace with him without delay, is his greatest interest of all others in the world, *Acts xvi. 29. 30.*

Thus

Thus man's soul is treated by the word, through that kind of spiritual and intelligent sense of hearing : But man consisting of a body, as well as a soul, and thereupon having external as well as internal faculties, therefore some of the means, must be proportioned for this end. Accordingly, the sacraments, are most wisely prepared, by their symbolical water, bread and wine, to preach, and, as it were, realize to the very outward senses those great truths, which the word did reveal unto the mind, that so man may not only by the ear, hear of a crucified Christ, but also may see, handle and taste his dying love, together with the great benefits purchased thereby : And all this is, that dull unbelieving man, may by this visible means, be the more deeply impressed and persuaded of the reality, of the high and spiritual invisible mysteries imported under them. Hence the Apostle *Paul*, was no less astonished at the defection from the truth amongst the *Galatians*, considering that not only in the word, they had heard Christ plainly preached, and in hearing had so sensibly received the spirit of God, in his sanctifying and comforting influences, but also in the sacrament, had seen Christ clearly crucified before their eyes, *Gal. iii. 1, 2*. All which by the way demonstrates these external means, to be no sham nor human invention, but truly of divine institution, as conveying the greatest realities and blessings to the souls of men.

But now after all these means of word and sacraments, they being still but means and conduits, and not at all the living and life giving spirit of God, therefore in great wisdom, in order unto the setting the holy Ghost on work, (the alone efficient cause of spiritual life,) the impotent sinner, to the praise of the riches and power of grace, is appointed as the great third mean, to apply to God
by

by prayer and supplication, *Ezek. xxxvi. 27.* — Yet for all these things, will I be enquired of by the house of Israel. And certainly, since by the fall, man is spiritually dead, not able to think so much as one good thought (*2 Cor. iii. 5.*) without a supernatural principle of spiritual life : And seeing the fountain of this life, is only with God, and he on the other hand, most freely offering the same, and inviting sinners seriously to apply unto him through Jesus Christ, in order to their being made-partakers thereof, *Rev. xxii. 17.* There can be nothing more reasonable, than for sinners, to the praise of grace, ingenuously to acknowledge their impotency and with all the seriousness they can attain unto, to cry with *Ephraim*, turn me, O Lord, and I shall be turned, *Jer. xxxi. 18.* And to continue importunate, (their salvation depending upon a gracious return) till God sensibly allow the same.

All which means of word, sacraments and prayer having been once (by the spirit of God) made efficacious conduits of spiritual life, unto the souls of elect persons : They natively ever after that, highly esteem them, and greatly delight in them, (*Psal. lxiii. and Psal. xlii.*) following on to know and enjoy more and more of the fulness of Christ, in the use of the foresaid means ; even to see his power and glory in the sanctuary ; till the good work begun be perfected, and the glorious day, break, in which all the shadows of ordinances are to flee away, *Song ii. 19.* And the elect of God to enter the city, where there is no temple ; the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb being the temple thereof, *Rev. xxi. 22.* In fine, these outward means of grace, will be highly prized and improved by all serious godly souls, till they come to that state, where conformity and communion with God shall be brought unto perfection : God come as near the soul, and the soul as near God as possible :

So that the church, then, being made perfect, shall bid an eternal farewell, to all those external intervening means, the great and last end being accomplished. Briefly, immediate vision and perfect knowledge shall render the word and sacraments of no use : And immediate perfect enjoyment shall leave no room for supplication or prayer.

By all which we may clearly see, the great fullness, suitableness and reasonableness of the foresaid external means of word, sacraments and prayer, as most proper conduits, contrived by the all-wise God, for the beginning, carrying on and perfecting, the great salvation in the souls of the elect. Which was the second general head to be cleared, with respect unto the glorious covenant of grace, in its application unto the children of men.

But now after all these means, however excellent in their own order of working, to wit, as conduits of spiritual blessings from God, to intelligent, rational creatures in tabernacles of clay; yet still in themselves they are dead things : As on the other hand, the elect with whom they have to do, are by nature persons spiritually dead in sins and trespasses; and therefore the holy Ghost, who of old informed and put life into the dead mass of matter, in the first creation, *Gen. i. 2.* must also of necessity along with the foresaid means, send forth an almighty quickning power; infusing a supernatural principle of spiritual life into the souls of the foresaid persons, specially interested in the covenant of grace. *Eph. ii. 1.*

By virtue of this principle of spiritual life, the soul is made partaker of the divine nature, *2 Pet. i. 4.* Importing, that the communicable perfections of the divine nature, are as really and nearly resembled and imitated in the regeneration, and perfected sanctification of the elect, as the finite human nature, is capable of : So that in process of time, the

the knowledge, righteousness and holiness of the redeemed in heaven, shall be to such perfection, that their very inherent qualifications, abstract from all other relative considerations shall evidently proclaim them before God, Angels and men, to have been persons indeed *born of God*, *John* i. 13. Yea such shall be their glorious perfection this way, that, the deity shall not be ashamed to call them sons, nor our Lord (*Heb.* ii. 11.) to term them brethren: They shall all so conspicuously have this name of their God writ upon their foreheads, *Rev.* xxii. 4.

This conformity, being begun in regeneration, is gradually advanced by the daily influences of grace, in the due use of the outward means, in the nursery of the church here below; till the souls transplantation into heaven, and the immediate enjoyment of God, require perfection in holiness.

The foresaid principle of spiritual life, infused in the elect's souls at their regeneration presently appeareth in their natures, frame and conversation. For this principle spreading over all the powers of the soul, the regenerate person is instantly found knowing, loving, hating, delighting, designing and endeavoring, in resemblance of the deity. As *First*, The mind now beginneth to know things as they are: To see God in Christ, as the chief good, his special favour to be better than life; his image (in point of holiness) to be the greatest perfection in human nature; his intimate fellowship, in the warm sheddings abroad of his love, to be the sweetest soul-refreshing enjoyment; and his kingdom to be the greatest inheritance. As on the other hand, the soul now also, seeth sin to be the greatest evil, a man's soul to be his all; a crucified Christ to be the wisdom and power of God, in order to salvation.

Again the regenerate person, is also found loving according as God loves; loving God himself,

Son, his spirit, his image, his law, his glory, his people and interests in the world. And so likewise they are found loving and delighting according as what God doth. So that sin, from the greatest to the least; their own as well as the sin of others, yea the very first motions, and appearance of evil, (in so far as renewed) is now become the abominable thing, which their soul hateth; *Psal* cxix 128. So also on the other hand, their delight runs in a divine channel: delighting themselves in God, in Christ, in the sensible, sanctifying, and comforting operations of the holy Ghost; and taking great pleasure in holy, secret, private and public duties, and in the fellowship of the saints. So likewise their grand endeavor and design is also of the same nature with God's; they eying and seeking his glory, in the whole of their conversation; so that however opposite their walk was to Christ, previous to regeneration; yet now (*Phil.* i. 21.) *for them to live is Christ*: His glory being become their great and last end.

This sanctification of the elect of God (in point of divine power and all-sufficiency) no doubt might at once have been made perfect as in man's first creation: But for great, holy and wise ends, matters are so ordered, that the foresaid work, is only gradually carried on to perfection; that so, 1. The perfections of the deity, adjusted to the militant condition of the church; such as the unchangeableness of the divine love, the faithfulness of divine promises, the riches of pardoning mercy, the power of restoring grace, and the efficacy of divine consolations, may, all of them have full and frequent access to display themselves. As also this gradual method of perfecting the church, is most proper, because, 2dly, Thereby the great merit and influence of the glorious high priest; his satisfaction and intercession above, doth daily appear, in procuring

curing the necessary applications of the foresaid perfections in favor of his sinful, imperfect and weak members here below; and that thereupon, our infinite obligations to our Lord, towards influencing our love and obedience, might daily be clear, and fresh in our view. Again, *3dly*, The exercising of the militant graces of faith, hope, patience and prayer, to the glory of their author and preserver, in the face of so great opposition, from sin, Satan and the world; required also, that matters should be thus ordered. And therefore in great wisdom, the elect are first babes, then young men, and then fathers, and at last come unto the stature of a perfect man in Christ; 1 *John* ii. 12.

13. *Eph* 4 13.

But now after all this, it is probable that, a more full particular and rational account of this supernatural principle of spiritual life, infused by the holy Ghost, and so much disputed in its reality, and ridiculed in its operations by many at this day, will be desired; together with the clearing of its influence upon the application of the covenant of grace unto the elect. For satisfying of which, let us only allow a few serious thoughts, upon these three following truths.

As *First*, The all-wise God, 1. Remembering always his electing love to his chosen people; and *2dly*, His promise of their salvation to the mediator. And *3dly*, The designed method agreed upon, for their coming by this salvation, to wit, by repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and a course of true holiness, in obedience unto the dictates of the holy Ghost, and the precepts of his word, 2 *Thess* ii. 13. All which, *4thly*, God knowing to be impossibilities unto the elect, who are dead in trespasses and sins, *Eph* ii. 1, 2. Therefore,

Secondly.

Secondly. The decreed time and mean being come, of an elect sinner's conversion ; the electing love of the Father, the pleading satisfaction and intercession of the Son, setteth the holy Ghost on work (*John* xvi. 7, 8, 9) to create a supernatural principle of spiritual life, renewing and sanctifying the whole man, after the image of God, *Eph.* ii. 1, 10. *Col.* iii. 10. Upon which,

Thirdly. This supernatural principle being essentially the same with the image of God, after which man was at first created : It can upon the matter be nothing else, but God's *immediate inducing* the soul with a *supernatural holy power, to know him, believe in him, love him, and obey him aright.* *Jer* xxxiii 31 *Deut* xxx 6. *Ezek.* xxxvi 27.

The soul being thus indued with this supernatural holy power ; the several faculties of mind, will and affections, begin immediately, and act according to their renewed and sanctified nature. The mind now seeth God, in the truth of his being in the great glory of his perfections, and in the transcendent worth of his special love and favour offered in Christ, *Song.* v. 10. *Matth.* xiii 44. Again, upon this saving knowledge in the mind, the will cordially falleth in love with God in Christ, above all other objects in heaven or in earth, desiring and choosing him, his special favour, conformity unto him, and communion with him, above all blessings and enjoyments in the world, *Psal.* lxxiii. 25. Upon all which the mind and will, (the two great leading and influencing faculties) being thus renewed and sanctified ; It is evident, the person cannot but instantly and cordially subject the whole man, in heart and life, unto the law of such a God, in whom now an infinite greatness, holiness and goodness is discovered. And hence we are plainly told, that upon this day of almighty power operating upon the souls of the
mediator's

mediator's people they instantly become a most willing people, in the beauties of holiness, *Psal. cx. 9.*

And in reason, it cannot be otherways, for they, seeing the Lord Jesus Christ to be the chief good; having and offering all the soul can desire, whether wisdom righteousness sanctification and redemption, they cannot but cordially accept of such an all sufficient saviour in all his offices, which is saving and justifying faith. And again, they apprehending God in Christ, as their creator and redeemer, and his law to be the product of infinite wisdom, holiness and goodness, they cannot but in reason mourn for sin, hate it, and thereupon obey their creator. and glorify their redeemer, in walking by a rule, which in itself is now seen to be so just, holy and good; which is true and holy obedience.

By all which, it is obvious, that faith, repentance and new obedience, are the immediate necessary native product of the foresaid principle of spiritual life; which three being the great prerequisites, qualifying the elect for the actual reception of the blessings of the covenant; accordingly the persons so qualified, are thereupon immediately justified, adopted, sanctified, and in due time glorified, *John i. 12. Rom. viii. 30* And thus we may clearly see, how the holy Ghost, by his internal gracious operations, prepareth the souls of God's chosen, and bringeth home the blessings of the great salvation unto them, which was the third great mean, or decreed way we spake of, for applying the covenant of grace, in its gracious benefits, unto all interested therein.

Considering the premisses, there can be no room left for reason to object, that this supernatural principle of spiritual life, is a thing absolutely mysterious, and no ways intelligible. In regard 1. reason must certainly own, that this holy principle or power, to know, love and obey God, aright,

was at first created with man : For to suppose a rational intelligent being, as coming immediately out of the creator's hands, without any one of the foresaid powers ; were to impeach both the divine wisdom and holiness, who made all rational beings at first most perfect and upright ; And therefore, *2dly*. Reason must also by necessary consequence acknowledge, that God can yet produce such a principle. and that the human soul is a subject capable of it. Upon which, *3dly* Considering that, without God's creating the foresaid principle of spiritual life again, in the souls of some of fallen mankind ; he should certainly lose the whole glory of the creation of the human race ; as to any true, holy love or obedience, upon their part, in time or eternity. I say, considering these things, it is impossible that reason can ever be so gross, as to suppose, that infinite wisdom and goodness will allow no such operation of the holy Ghost, upon the souls of the children of men a second time.

For *First*, doth God love himself above all ? And is spiritual life his most lively image in man ? And did the only Son of God die, that some of mankind might thus live ? As also, did God at man's creation, convene the great council of the adoreable Trinity, and thereupon made him, an intelligent, rational, moral being ; the only creature in the whole lower world, fit for glorifying and enjoying of him ; and yet after all this, shall God leave no true vestige or exact signature of what a noble and excellent creature man was once at his first creation ? or will God suffer satan and sin absolutely to destroy, the whole glorious product of creating and redeeming love ? Surely then, we have solid ground to believe, that when God counts the people in the day of judgment, it shall be found, *Psal.* lxxxvii. 5, 6. that for himself and for the glory of his creating and redeeming per-

fections,

of the covenant of Grace, comes to be applied. 285

fections, ——— *This man, and that man there, was heaven-born in Zion.*

Let reason then, for ever allow, and acknowledge, that regeneration is no more sham ; but must certainly be a most necessary, rational and accountable doctrine ; And therefore no wonder, if it was introduced and prefaced with a double verily, by that infallible and great teacher, our Lord, of old, *John iii 3 Verily verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* And if any person, have slight mean thoughts, of this great doctrine of regeneration, let all such know, that as ignorance is the grand enemy of solid learning ; so infallibly absolute estrangement, from the power of regenerating grace, must be at the bottom, of such gross sentiments, *1 Cor. ii. 14.*

C H A P T E R XIV.

The next general head relative to the covenant of Grace, is the pre-requisites upon the elects part, in order to their actual enjoyment of the great salvation promised therein. And these are three : 1 Sound faith in the Lord Jesus Christ : And 2dly, Sincere repentance towards God ; And then 3dly, Holy obedience, as the native fruit and sure evidence of both the former. These pre-requisites are neither in the elects power to perform ; nor when wrought in them, are they in the least meritorious of salvation ; And therefore most consistent with the grace of the covenant. And yet on the other hand are most necessary qualifications, upon the part of the elect, towards glorifying the essential divine perfections, in bringing about their salvation through Christ. What great pity then is it ? That some wise and good men, should make so much groundless noise
about

about determining the condition in the covenant of grace. The necessity and reasonableness of all the pre-requisites, discoursed and cleared at considerable length. Justice being essential to the deity, of necessity there must be a perfect righteousness for man to stand in before God : And no man having such of his own, he must either by faith lay hold upon perfect righteousness of Christ, or of necessity fall into the hands of justice. The glory of the divine majesty and holiness, necessarily requireth the rebellious sinner to humble himself and become sincerely penitent before God. Again, such is the infinite perfection of the divine holiness, that any one known sin habitually allowed, and reserved, will infallibly mar real reconciliation with God : And therefore, true holiness is absolutely necessary unto salvation. Notwithstanding of the foresaid pre-requisites, yet considering God's gracious way, of working them in the hearts of sinners ; great is the condescension of the terms of salvation, required in the covenant of grace. God knowing sinners impotency, never expecteth that any man will turn himself ; yet still repeated essays, towards faith, repentance and new obedience, and looking unto the Lord for spiritual life and strength remain to be sinners duty. In fine, no solid objection can possibly be made, against either the reasonableness or condescension of the terms of salvation. The practical improvement of the premises, is the part of all the book, which most nearly concerneth us. The divine laws and statutes, requiring sound faith, sincere repentance, and holy obedience in order to salvation, are more peremptory and immutable, than the laws of the Medes and Persians. Let us therefore beware of resting in the shadows or false resemblances of those necessary and important performances.

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The manifold mistakes, which men are liable unto, in relation to saving faith, are discoursed, The scriptural account of justifying faith particularly opened up, at considerable length. The several deceiving resemblances of repentance being discovered; its true nature and import is declared.

HAVING now discoursed the internal operations of the holy Ghost in regeneration; thereupon natively falls in, the *Third* general head proposed, relative to the covenant of grace, which was to clear the scripture pre-requisites, on the part of elect sinners, in order to the great salvation design'd in this covenant; Its being actually applied unto them. Which pre-requisites are three in number, comprehending under them all other qualifications or performances, which may be so termed.

The *First* is, sound faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, *Acts xvi. 31 Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*; compared with *Mark xvi. 16 — He that believeth not shall be damned.* The *Second*, is sincere repentance towards God, *Luke xiii. 3 — Nay, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.* The *Third* is, a course of holy obedience, as the native fruit and sure evidence of the sincerity of both the former, *Heb. xii. 14. — Without holiness no man shall see God.*

While I call these things scripture pre requisites, on the elects part, in order to salvation, it is no ways to be understood: either first, as if all or any of these duties were in the elects power to perform: The contrary (at great length) having been already made evident. Far less *Secondly*, is it to be understood, as if the covenant of grace, any ways depended in its accomplishment upon the will and

pleasure of the elect ; as they shall proceed or not, unto the performance of the foresaid duties. For, as was formerly cleared, the covenant (in its original being) is an absolute decree or promise, wherein God in Christ, unchangeably purposed and engaged, not only to bestow the great salvation, as the end ; but also by his grace to prepare, dispose and enable the soul (as the mean) to accept of Christ and of his great salvation through him, *Psal. cx. 3. John vi. 45.* So that God bestowing and working those graces of faith and repentance, together with practical holiness as their product ; is (strictly speaking) really a part ; yea and a great part of God's fulfilment of the covenant, rather than any conditional performance upon their part. For beyond all controversy, the covenant of grace, considered as in its original mould, in the divine breast, is nothing else but an absolute promise of salvation through Christ, *Gen. xxii. 17, 18.* Which therefore may very justly be termed to be a covenant rather made by God with the elect ; than by the elect with God : Hence *David* certainly conceived aright of it, while he said, *2 Sam. xxii. 5* That God had made with him an everlasting covenant, &c.

But withal, notwithstanding of these truths (no extream being good) while we justly thus take care of the glory of rich and free grace, in this covenant ; Let us not omit on the other hand, to be most plain and positive, in asserting according to the word of God, that the unalterable decreed method of God's bringing his elect, within the bond of this covenant ; is by their cordial receiving the Lord Jesus Christ : The soundness of which faith must appear in a course of holy obedience ; in proportion to the duration of the christian's life in this world, *John iii. 18. Jam. ii. 17.*

And

And therefore, what a great pity is it, That some great, good and wise men, should have any differences, whether more public or private about this matter : Some asserting the covenant, to have a condition, and others quarrelling the preaching of any condition in the said covenant : Seeing that upon the main, they are agreed ; as will clearly appear, if we consider, that those who plead for and preach up a condition, in the covenant of grace, intend nothing meritorious, or in the least inconsistent with the absolute freeness and riches of grace, in that covenant ; but only to hold out, that the divine decreed method for God's justifying and glorifying a sinner is, by God's first enabling them truly to believe and repent. And that none, till they actually embrace a whole Christ, can have the least right or warrant (in scripture account) to claim the foresaid covenant, or the pardon, grace and glory therein, as really and certainly appertaining to them.

And who is it, that solidly believeth the doctrine of election ; or that is truly acquainted with the great deceitfulness and laxness of men's hearts, and principles, in the matters of religion ? Man naturally, strongly inclining to mistake and rest upon the externals thereof : And withal considering that man's carnal confidence and presumptuous hopes of heaven, cannot be easily broken, *Psal.* l. 16, 17. *Matth.* xxv 11. Who is it, I say, that will seriously ponder these things, and not commend ministers for preaching most positively, the absolute necessity of regeneration, faith, repentance and new obedience, in order to the obtaining, clearing and proving a saving interest in the covenant of grace, and the great salvation contained therein.

And as for the different phrases or words of condition, scripture pre requisites, necessary qualifications

fications, gospel terms, decreed method of bringing to salvation, and the like expressions, often used in preaching the gospel; what person judging and speaking impartially, must not own, that all these ~~fore~~ said terms, may be most safely used? Seeing upon due explication, and according to the frequent acceptation of the foresaid phrases, or terms in divinity, they are upon the matter very much synonymous; and all of them perfectly consistent with the preaching up the glory of the power and riches of free grace in the covenant.

More especially considering, that on the other hand, those who are not so free for terming any thing upon the elects part, explicitly and formally a condition of the covenant of grace; can never from scripture or reason, intend any more by their cautiousness, but that nothing should be preached, derogatory to the riches or power, of the grace of God in Christ Jesus, in the foresaid covenant.

And therefore upon the whole, seeing there is no gospel subject, difference, about which can ever possibly give satan such a handle against religion, or cause the world begin, and term the whole of the gospel a mere sham: Or can ever more unhinge the faith and consolation of the godly, than what a difference about the covenant of grace, and the method of coming by an interest therein, will infallibly do: O, therefore in *the bowels of Christ*, let all that love his glorious name, the success of the everlasting gospel, and the peace and comfort of the church of God, be intreated to lay aside all differences of this kind: Which however well designed on both sides, yet thro' the subtilty of satan, the carnal reasonings of men's hearts, and the weakness of many godly persons; may produce very fatal consequences. For certainly,

ly, it can never prove a piece of acceptable service to our Lord, for any person to cause the world to suppose that He, who was perfectly upon the father's counsels from eternity; hath yet, notwithstanding, left it as a matter in doubt and controversy; Whether the covenant of grace made for the elect, hath a condition or not: Or whether or not, the said covenant hath a certain decreed way, for sinners being brought within the bond thereof, and thereupon being made gradually partakers of all the great blessings contained therein.

—————O, Tell it not in *Gath*, nor publish it in the streets of *Askelon*.

Having premised these things, I return to clear the necessity and reasonableness of the foresaid three scripture pre-requisites, qualifying sinners for salvation. And *First*, as to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the necessity and reasonableness thereof, in order to salvation, cannot but be most evident, if we consider, that the perfect justice and righteousness of God, according to the law, requireth perfect obedience from man, in order to his justification. Which justice, being infinite in God, essential unto him (*Exod xxxiv. 7*) and he thereupon necessarily requiring a perfect righteousness from man; and upon the other hand, no man, even after regeneration, having any such righteousness of his own working; therefore of necessity he must either come short of justification, or he must by faith, accept of Christ offered, as the Lord his righteousness; intirely trusting unto Christ's perfect obedience unto death; as the alone meritorious cause of his justification and salvation. Thus the great, the holy and laborious Apostle Paul, that great favourite of heaven, durst not (notwithstanding of all his great performances, manifold sufferings, and extraordinary privileges) in the least adventure, upon another bottom, than
the

the alone righteousness of God, which is by faith in Christ Jesus ; *Phil.* iii 8, 9. And whoever will consider the said context, shall find him most accurate, particular and full, lest he should have fallen into any mistake, in this great fundamental truth, absolutely necessary for his justification.

Again, *Secondly*, as to repentance considering, that the honour and glory of the divine majesty and holiness, necessarily requireth the rebel, humbly to confess and supplicate for pardon ; and to cease from doing evil before the great God, can with honour to the foresaid perfections, be reconciled unto him : Reason must certainly own the necessity of the foresaid performances ; and acknowledge, that nothing can be more reasonable, than that the rebellious dust should humble itself greatly before the high, holy and merciful God, confessing its sins, with much of self loathing, godly sorrow, and sincere purposes towards reformation, *Isai.* i. 16, 17, 18 *Jam.* iv. 10.

And *3dly*, As to the necessity and reasonableness of true holiness, it will no less appear, if we consider the infinite essential holiness, of the deity, rendering him of purer eyes, than that he can behold iniquity. *Hab.* i. 13. So that it is impossible that he can by his spirit, dwell in any unregenerate, unholy soul, living in the love and practice of known sin. Briefly, The thrice holy God, (*Psal.* xciv. 20) can never agree with the throne of iniquity : Neither can infinite holiness and absolute enmity, against God and his law, ever be reconciled. There is therefore an absolute necessity for true holiness ; evidenced by a superlative love to God, the hatred of all known sin, and a cordial respect to all the divine commands, before this holy one can be supposed to take up his abode in any soul, in order unto the allowing the daily necessary influences of life, light, strength,
peace

peace and joy, for the carrying on, and perfecting sanctification. Yea more,

Such is the infinite perfection of the divine holiness, it being the peculiar attribute, in which the deity accounteth himself glorious, *Exod. xv.*

11. *That one sin, where known and delighted in, and the soul not willing to part with it, nor in earnest desirous of grace, for its mortification: In that case, this one sin, is equally inconsistent with the divine special favour, complacency and fellowship, (Amos iii. 3.) as what a thousand of the grossest transgressions are.* For if the holiness of God, should allow him to behold and approve of any one known and allowed sin, in the fore said sense, then why not of two, and so on, to hundreds and thousands, yea to all. For it being *sin as sin, i. e.* as contrary to his holy nature and law, which maketh it the abominable thing, which God's soul hateth: Its evident, that the deity must change his nature, and renounce his supreme dominion, and so cease to be God, that moment in which he can behold any iniquity with approbation, *Hab. i. 13.* And therefore upon the whole, if it be reasonable for the dependent and sinful dust to acknowledge, and sincerely grieve and mourn, for its transgressions of the law of its creator, then reason strongly pleadeth for, and preacheth up repentance. And if it be reasonable, for a guilty, sinner, not able to answer the demands of justice, to betake himself to the offers of mercy; and for an impotent sinner (absolutely unable perfectly to fulfil the law) to consult its eternal interest, in embracing a perfect righteousness, prepared by another, and freely offered unto them, by virtue of which they shall be undoubtedly justified and saved: Then nothing can be more reasonable, than faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Again, if it be reasonable for the human soul, to endeavour

the original perfection of its nature, and the recovery of the glorious image of God; and if it be suitable for the sinner, to evidence the sincerity of his faith and repentance by the grateful return of new obedience: And if it be commendable for the rational human soul, to desire the being made lovely in the sight of a holy God, and the being qualified for spiritual communion with God in ordinances here, and for the immediate enjoyment of him in heaven; then reason, can plead for nothing more strongly, than for sincerity, liveliness and perseverance in practical holiness. In fine, if either love to our creator, or to our redeemer, or to ourselves, be congruous to a reasonable nature, then faith, repentance and new obedience, must practically imply in them, some of the prime and highest dictates of reason.

As for the other branch of the purpose in hand, to wit, The great condescension of the foresaid terms required of sinners, in order to salvation; and that notwithstanding of their natural impotency for the same; as it is a most alluring and obliging piece of gospel doctrine; so it very much deserveth our consideration.

And therefore to demonstrate even to reason itself, the great accountableness and condescension of the terms, required of sinners in the gospel, in order to their obtaining salvation; let us but seriously ponder these few truths. As *First*, That God not only knoweth our spiritual impotency, for any of the great gospel duties of faith and repentance, but frequently asserts the same in his word, *John vi 44 Isa liii i.e. 2dly*, That he there-upon never expecteth, that one of fallen mankind, will of themselves obey any of the foresaid gospel calls. Again, *3dly*, That while sinners are diligent in the use of the outward means of grace, the Lord often alloweth them, the concurring influences

fluences of his spirit, in a common preparatory way, towards instructing, convincing and humbling them; begetting also, sometimes promising resolution and inclinations God-ward; *Matth. xiii.—Mark xii. 34. 4thly*, That upon the person's improving these common influences, and crying, that the work may become more powerful, irresistible and saving.

A gracious God (though no ways obliged thereunto, either by promise, or from the nature of any previous dispositions or preparatory work, that possibly can be, with the most polished, and best prepared unregenerate soul) yet often condescends to reveal the Almighty arm, giving life to the withered hand, while aiming at the divine command to stretch it forth. And thus he is the God, who, in a sovereign and gracious manner takes away the heart of stone, and creates the new heart of flesh: But withal, will be enquired of, by the house of *Israel*, to do these things for them, *Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27*. Upon all which,

Let all sensible sinners, any ways impressed with discoveries of the glory and excellency of Christ; with the great evil of sin; and with the beauty and interest of true holiness; lay aside all perplexing doubts and fears, and unseasonable preposterous inquiries, about their election, Christ dying for them, and the like; and without delay, fall in with this plain method, tending to salvation; of acknowledging their inability, for performing the foresaid great gospel duties; and of essaying faith, repentance and new obedience, in the strength of the Lord, with all the seriousness they can attain unto. And thereupon continuing in the diligent use of outward means, to wait for a day of saving power from on high. It being certain, that we can only be assured of our election, and of Christ's having died for us, by our *effectual calling*,
2 *Pet. i. 10.* Y 2 And

And now, considering the premisses, what reasonable man, must not acknowledge the covenant of grace, to be a most condescending transaction; and the way of God's welcoming sinners, to be exceedingly adjusted, unto the dead and impotent condition, in which fallen man is by nature: And that the terms of the said covenant, to wit, faith, repentance and new obedience, are all of them, both most reasonable, and condescending. In fine, surely none but some monstrous soul, will ever maintain, that our Lord is a hard man, reaping where he doth not sow.

The practical improvement of the premisses, is the part of all this discourse, which most nearly concerneth us; being saved or lost, perfectly happy or absolutely miserable, in time and eternity, as we hearken, or not, unto the foresaid terms of salvation. These subsequent three decrees, are the standing laws and statutes of the great God and supreme judge; and are more irrevocable than those of the *Medes and Persians*: As *First*, That if guilty sinners, from the highest to the lowest, *kiss not the Son*, by flying to his righteousness, in order to justification, that then his wrath (which is but now smothering) shall infallibly break out into a flame; *Psal. ii. 12. 2dly*, That if rebellious man turn not, by sincere confession of sin, mourning for it, and reformation from it, God will whet his sword, *Psal. vii. 12. 3dly*, That without positive holiness no man shall see God, *Heb. xii. 14*. And that nothing that defileth, can enter the holy city, *Rev. xxi. 27*.

All which statutes are not only enacted by the great King, but sealed by his positive public declarations & proclamations in the church, these five thousand years and upward *Gen. iv. 6, 7*. So that the divine word of honour, is concerned to fulfil them; as he would evidence himself to be the infinitely wise

wise, faithful and unchangeable God. Yea more, the foresaid statutes, are no less than founded, upon the infinite essential holiness of the deity; so that it is not merely, the sovereignty of the divine will, but the essential, necessary and inseparable holiness of the divine nature, which requireth these things. Briefly, God being infinitely pure; it is impossible for him to approve of the love or practice of any one sin, and much less of a sinful nature, absolutely corrupt, and of a course of practical wickedness; as what is to be found with every impenitent, unbelieving, unregenerate person: Let reason then solidly believe, that till the deity change his nature, he will infallibly be of one mind, in the foresaid statutes, and that no man can, or shall ever turn him.

Many perhaps who read these truths, through stupidity and unconcernedness, with eternal interests, may in their hearts, mock and tush at the foresaid decrees and statutes, together with their annexed threatnings. But all this will never recal them; and far less render them null. Yea, should an appeal be made to reason in this matter, these three principles, must certainly be granted.

First. That an all-wise God would never create and preserve a world of men at such great cost, unto his providence, but with an eye to the glorifying of some one or other of his divine perfections.

2dly. Man being undoubtedly sinful in nature and life, and the deity being essentially holy and just (*Exod xxxv. 7.*) he must, infallibly thereupon have satisfaction, either from sinners themselves, or from his Son as their surety. And hence we have that remarkable expression, that *he that*

believeth not (John iii. 18) is condemned already, intimating, that there is no possibility of escaping wrath, without satisfaction to divine justice, for the sins of the person guilty. *3dly.* That to suppose absolute mercy in God, or his pardoning a sinner, without satisfaction, is not only to rob God

of justice, a most glorious perfection ; (as upon the doctrine of predestination, was at great length cleared) but it is also, to suppose the divine contrivance of the death of the Son of God, to be the most unnecessary, vain, cruel, unnatural and monstrous project, that ever was heard of in the world. For, if God could pardon one sinner without satisfaction ; then why not a second and a third, till all the elect should have been pardoned : And if so, then how unaccountable and gross, must the whole progress of redemption performances be ? Such as the vailing of the divine glory of the Son of God, for thirty years and more ; the bloody sweat in the garden ; the shameful, painful and cursed crucifixion ; the strong cries upon the cross, all issuing in the death and burial of the only begotten Son of God, in satisfying justice, for the sins of a part of mankind. All which being considered ; can solid reason ever believe any possibility of salvation, or the chimera of absolute mercy, unto any impenitent, unbelieving, unholy sinner. Briefly, the conclusion of all is ; every man must cordially embrace the Lord Jesus Christ by faith, and in sincerity repent for his sins and become truly holy in heart and life ; or else infallibly he must perish eternally. Accordingly it was amongst our Lord's last and great instructions to his Apostles, to preach to the world, *That he that believeth shall be saved ; and he that believeth not shall be damned Mark xvi. 16.*

And therefore in the fear of God, I beseech all, into whose hands this book shall come, seriously to believe and remember, that it is neither our carnal blind reasonings against the being of God, and truth of revealed religion ; nor our atheistical thoughts of God's non-observance of our ways on earth, nor our bold despising thoughts of the divine threatnings, accounting it
melancholy

melancholy to notice them ; nor yet our fond thoughts of absolute mercy at the long run, that ever will be able upon a death bed to keep us, from being a terror to ourselves : More especially when conscience shall charge home upon us, the whole guilt of unrepented of, original and actual sin ; and deeply and irresistibly impress upon our spirits, our certain and immediate approach before the judgment-seat of the living and thrice ho'y God. When (but to be feared too late) the securing a saving interest (by faith) in a crucified Christ and the getting of true holiness by the operation of his spirit, will be believed without any preacher, to have been matters worthy of the most serious thoughts and endeavours of the greatest souls among men. This was formerly acknowledged (but out of time) by him of old, who intreated *Abraham* to send warning to his five brethren, in his father's house, lest they should also come to his place of torment, *Luke xvi. 28.*

Allow me then, reader, to perswade thee to believe it, and to believe it solidly, that God who can never make man in vain ; and whose omniscient eye hath traced thee, in all thy ways, whether more secret or open since thy creation ; and particularly, with respect unto thy contempt of the great offers of pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace published (through the death of his Son) in the gospel : And who hath also considered, thy secret quenching of, and repeated strivings with his spirit ; often speaking c'sely, and awakening thy conscience with power. I say, assure thy soul, this God will infallibly at the long run, be thy righteous judge, consulting the glory of his own perfections ; as thou shalt be found within this covenant of grace or not. And this he will do, without shewing the least regard unto any of the foolish and groundless thoughts and reason-

ings of thy dark vain mind, against either the truth of his being, the faithfulness of his threatenings, or the impartiality of his justice. And therefore, yet seriously ponder those great and weighty words, expressed of old by God,—*These things hast thou done and I kept silence: Thou thought'st, that I was altogether such an one as thyself: But I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes, Psal. l. 31.*

These things being premised, the conclusion of all, issueth in this grand direction, even,

To beware of resting in the false shadowy resemblances of true faith, repentance and holiness; without the essentials of those necessary and concerning graces and performances.

And *First*, As to saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; as thou lovest thy immortal soul, mistake not thy baptism, thy external approaching the table of the Lord, nor yet thy head knowledge of, and general assent unto the doctrine of the gospel, relative to thy lost state, Christ's person, natures and offices; as if any, or all of these together, were indeed saving faith. Yea more, suppose there should be at times some warm motions and impressions begotten, by hearing of the bleeding dying love of Christ, and of the greatness of the salvation purchased by him; together with the free and condescending offers ensuing thereupon: Yet all these may be, without this precious saving grace: For, however,

These impressing truths may move natural affections, and cause some present delight in hearing; some concern for Christ's sufferings, (*Luke xxiii. 27, 28*) some slight sense of obligations to love him, and some promising-like resolutions (*Acts xxvi. 28*) to engage with him and religion more seriously than formerly: Yet after all this, within a few days, if not a few hours, upon very small temptations

temptations, the whole ingredients of the foresaid promising frame, may not only be quite gone; but the soul become as forgetful of God; as cold towards Christ; as much devoted to old beloved sins; and as backward to prayer, hearing, reading, meditation, as ever: And thereby, evidently declaring, that the ground upon which the good seed was sown, was but a meer resemblance of good earth, having the rocky heart underneath it, which can never bring forth good fruit, *Matth. xiii. 20, 21.*

If upon hearing those concerning truths, any soul seriously enquire, for a clear scriptural account of saving faith, in the Lord Jesus Christ: These two acts of the soul, plainly and fully describe it: As *First*, a solid assent of the mind unto the gospel report of man's sin, misery and inability to recover himself; and on the other hand of Christ's fulness suitableness and willingness, to save any that cometh aright unto him. This assent, when of a right kind and to issue in saving and justifying faith; it proveth 1. Affecting to the soul, weighing it with a sense of the guilt, vileness and power of sin, *Matth. xi. 28.* The soul is now truly weary and heavy laden, as being in earnest convinced of great sinfulness in nature and life, laying the person open to the wrath of God; and as seeing no help in themselves, if Christ interpose not. 2dly. This assent when genuine, proves also very exercising to the soul, begetting first a deep concern, for a special and saving interest in Christ, in order unto the obtaining pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace: *What shall I do to be saved?* (*Acts. xvi. 30.*) is now the one and great question of the soul, proposed with the greatest seriousness. Again 3dly. This concern influenceth very serious meditations upon the true nature of saving faith, sincere repentance and true holiness; so that the soul (jea-

lous of being deceived in a matter of so great consequence) is not easily satisfied with accounts of these great truths, till it clearly understand what is indeed the faith, repentance and holiness, which God requireth in his word, and which he will approve of. *Nicodemus* will not now part with Christ, *John* iii. 1. 2. 4. and 9. till he get the essentials of religion cleared up unto him; and his doubts concerning the same resolved. So likewise the converts mentioned in *Acts* ii. 37. cry out, men and brethren, *What shall we do?*

Upon this concern, 3dly. There doth also natively arise pantings and longings of soul, for a sensible day of God's almighty power, upon the heart, to enable it, for the foresaid performances, of believing, mourning and turning, *Jer.* xxxi. 18. So that the soul now readeth, heareth, prayeth, meditateth and converseth; and in all these hath a most serious eye, to the meeting with the spirit of God, in order to its being quickened and enabled to come aright to Christ, *Song.* vi. 1. Thus the genuine assent in saving faith, may be perfectly known. And from the premises, it is most evident, that the general, assent given by thousands of the hearers of the gospel, upon its doctrines (consisting mostly in the negative, of their not disputing the truth and certainty of them; as being Gallios in such matters) bears no manner of proportion to this solid assent, which is the effect of saving and powerful illumination and instruction. And so we come next to,

The second essential ingredient, and act of the soul, in saving and justifying faith. and that is, the cordial consent of the will unto the offer of Christ, and salvation by him, upon the terms of the gospel. Thus *Rom.* x. 10. *It is with the heart, that man believeth unto righteousness. For if the will, that high power, which openeth and shutteth*

shutteth the soul, and which influenceth and commandeth its love and obedience, be not for Christ, cordially embracing him; it is evident, that the soul, (which is the man) can no ways be said to have received him: And therefore, it is remarkable, that in the very lowest and most condescending offers of grace, contained in the gospel, they still require the *consent of the will*, *Rev. xxii. 17.*— And whosoever will, let him come, and take of the waters of life freely.

This cordial consent consists first, in the will's not only submitting unto this way of salvation by another, even the Lord Jesus Christ, and in being altogether denied to any righteousness or strength of our own *Phil. iii. 8. 9.* But in the will's desiring earnestly, to feel the powerful execution of all the mediatory offices, sensibly upon the heart: By Christ being made unto the soul, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. So that, teach me, turn me, and draw me, are amongst the first great cries of the believing soul, *John iii. 2. Jer. xxxi. 18. Song. i. 4.* Again *Secondly*, The will, in this consent, rests not in desiring, but proceedeth unto election, actually chusing the Lord Jesus Christ, in all the foresaid offices, as the only all-sufficient and suitable Saviour; and thereupon reflecteth on him, with satisfaction and confidence, looking no where else for salvation. Thus faith is plainly described, *Isai. xlv. 24.* *Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength; unto him shall men come.* And then *Thirdly*, The soundness of this consent greatly appeareth in the will's agreeing to all the terms, which Christ proposeth to his people, in order to his becoming theirs. Such as,

First, dethroning all our beloveds and portions, in respect of Christ: The soul now esteeming him, desiring him, delighting in him, and obeying him
above

above all; *Song* v. 10. *Psal.* lxxiii. 25. Secondly, The will also giveth now up with all known Sin, even the most agreeable to the natural temper, and worldly interests, *Luke* x. 8. and engageth with all known duties, *Psal.* cx. 5. 7. 128. 3dly, The will also absolutely resigneth up the whole person with its all, unto the Lord Jesus Christ, to be improved for him, and disposed of by him, as he seeth most for his own glory, *2 Cor.* v. 8.

Upon all which, we may clearly see saving faith to be quite another thing, than, that groundless fond presumption upon mercy in a dying hour, which causeth thousands of inconsiderate persons, to go down to the grave with a lie in their right hand: And it is certainly a most melancholy scriptural account, which might justly impress us all deeply; that *many shall say to the Lord in that day, Matth.* vii. 21. 22. Lord, Lord, (as if they had a saving interest in him) to whom he will reply, *depart from me, ye workers of iniquity.* In short, faith without works (*Jam.* ii. 17.) is dead. Let us therefore next seriously ponder, the other great pre-requisite, to wit, sincere evangelical repentance, as issuing in a course of true holy obedience.

And therefore, with respect unto this important grace; and duty of evangelical repentance: Let no man deceive his soul, by supposing, that some few convictions of sin, fears of wrath, influenced either by the word or rod, forcing some prayers, vows and external reformation for some days or weeks, will ever be accounted sincere repentance, by a heart-searching God, who cannot be deceived. For all these may be intirely owing unto self-love, and an awakened conscience, without any degree of sincere love to God, godly sorrow for sin or real delight in holiness, or any design towards the glory of the deity: Thus *Ahab* most remarkably humbled himself, *1 Kings* xxi. 27. 28. 29. and

and walked softly, and yet at the bottom was an impenitent wicked sinner, abhorred by the Lord.

If therefore thou wilt repent in earnest, in an evangelical and acceptable manner, there must of necessity be, a principle of faith in Christ, and of love to God, constraining thy soul unto an ingenuous confession of the sinfulness of thy nature and life, with the special aggravations of the same: And thereupon, thou must from the heart be affected, and grieve for the dishonour done unto such a holy, long-suffering and gracious God, *Luke xv. 15. 18.* Again, there must also be a real self-loathing, for the contrariety of thy nature and life, unto the holy nature and law of God, *Ezek. xxxvi. 31.* All which if genuine, will infallibly be accompanied with, a serious application unto God in Christ, for pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace, together with continued serious endeavours, from love to God, and delight in his law, towards universal new obedience; in all time coming. And thus we find plainly, all true believing penitent sinners described to be a willing people, coming unto God, through Christ, in the beauties of holiness; *Psal. cx. iii.* All which natively leads to the third and last pre-requisite unto salvation, to wit, true holiness, in nature, frame and walk: All which shall be particularly considered in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

*The meer Externals of religion, are accounted by many to be true holiness. This soul-destroying mistake set in true light. True holiness requir-
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est a holy nature, a holy frame, and a holy walk. All these particularly described; shewing what is essential and absolutely necessary unto the same. The Sum of all is, there is indeed a Superabundance of mercy and grace with God; and of merit with the Lord Jesus Christ: But still the essential divine majesty, justice and holiness, will never allow, neither mercy nor merit, grace nor glory, upon any unhumbled, unbelieving, unholy sinner.

HAVING heard the scripture accounts, of saving faith and sincere evangelical repentance: we proceed now to consider, the nature and import of true gospel holiness; as being absolutely necessary unto salvation, and as being the great solid proof of soundness and sincerity in the former two.

The mistakes on this head of holiness are also many: Some ignorantly supposing, that partaking of the sacraments, attending upon the ordinances, head knowledge in religion, a blameless conversation before the world, adorned with some acts of justice and charity: Especially if withal, there be at times in secret, something of prayer, confessions and vows: How many, I say, do firmly believe, that the foresaid meer externals of religion, are, real true holiness? Thus all the world would not perswade the *Pharisee* of old (*Luke xviii. 11. 12.* but that he was a none-such person for true religion, devotion and piety. And that there are many in every generation of the church, falling under the same fatal soul-ruining mistakes, is so evident, from manifold scripture assertions and parables, *Psal. l. 16. Matth xxiii. 27. Matth. xxv. 2.* As also from daily observation; that every thinking judicious man, must acknowledge, that the holy Ghost (in dividing and classing the children of Men, by *Agur* of old) had the most just and

and weighty grounds in the world, to leave it on record in the book of God, as a most grave and solemn warning, to all succeeding ages of the church : to wit, — *That there is a generation, that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness, Prov. xxx. 12.*

The abovementioned externals of religion, are so far from being that true gospel holiness, which is acceptable to God, and necessary to salvation, that they are but the meer shadows and resemblances of the same. For, as at the highest, in point of principle, they only flow from self-love, and as their efficient cause, from some common touches of the spirit along with the word or rod, upon the natural conscience, forcing it for some time, to imitate and feign true religion : So in their end, they look no farther, than either to silence a natural conscience, procure necessary reputation among men ; or to make up a righteousness of our own, wherein to trust and stand before God. All which evidently cometh far short, of the high and noble principle and end of all true holiness and obedience, to wit, a superlative love to God in Christ, and a zealous, single advancement of his glory.

Let none then, that would in earnest be approved in that solemn day, by the thrice holy and heart-teaching God, rest satisfied with any evidences of holiness, on this side of *truth in the inward parts, Psal. li. 6.*

And if any upon the hearing of these searching truths, be desirous of the scripture accounts of true holiness ; we are positively told by God, that these three ingredients, are absolutely necessary to the constitution thereof. As *First*, There must be a holy nature : And *Secondly*, A holy frame : And *Thirdly*, A holy walk and conversation. Thus there must be both true habitual and actual holiness.

First,

First, There must be a holy nature, otherways the person is still the old man: Whatever superficial changes, the word, rod or spirit, may have produced at times, upon either frame or conversation. Plainly the nature, which is the man (previous to regeneration) is yet the sepulchre, full of moral corruption and wickedness (*Matth* xxiii. 27) however much, it may be whitened before the world by restraining or common grace. So that whatever conformity to the letter of the law, is to be found with the person, yet the omniscient eye, beholdeth a predominant contrariety to both tables: And the seeds of all rebellion, as yet to be lively and strong in the soul, *Rom.* viii. 7. And therefore, the necessity of a saving change, even upon the nature, is from reason most evident; the partial changes upon the frame and conversation; being at best, but like the pruning of the branches: while the stock, still remains to be the old cursed wild olive.

This holiness of the nature, consisteth first, in the saving illumination of the mind; causing the soul to know God in Christ, to be the chief good, and sin to be the greatest evil, and holiness to be the greatest perfection of the human nature: And thereupon, causing the practical understanding or judgment to pass sentence accordingly. Thus the saving change upon the the nature, beginneth in the mind, as the apostle most emphatically declar-eth, *2 Cor.* iv. 6. *For God, who commandeth the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.* Secondly, In consequence to the former, it consisteth in the will's being quite turned about from its former beloved objects. So that now God in Christ is loved above all; sin hated above all; and the duties of holy obedience delighted in

in above all other performances : Whereas before, enmity against God, and his law, love unto, and complacency in sin, had intirely the throne. And thus it is, that the day of almighty power, makes a willing people in the beauties of holiness, *Psal. cx. 3.* *Thirdly*, The mind and Will, those leading powers, being thus renewed and sanctified ; the affections thereupon begin and move regularly : Turning from the creature to God, from sin to holiness, and from temporal vanities, to the sure mercies of *David*, *Luke xv. 15, 18.*

The conscience, now also, being well informed, speaks distinctly, faithfully and boldly, for God ; against all sin, and for all duty ; in respect of what before, *Act. xxiv. 16.* The memory also, in the midst of all its failures, yet now still retaineth the impressions of the great, leading, preserving truths of the gospel : Never altogether forgetting God, to be the fountain of living waters ; Christ to be the pearl of great price, and all other portions to be but broken cisterns ; sin to be the evil of evils, and true godliness to be the greatest gain and contentment. Thus *Jonah*, who for a time seemed to have lost all religious impressions in the world, behold how, upon a little reflection (though in very confounding circumstances at the time) he remembereth God and his temple, and that all other objects, were but lying vanities ; and that all who forsake God, do forsake their own mercy, *Jonah ii. 7, 8.* And lastly, the inward man, being thus sanctified, the outward man in the members thereof, becometh also now, the servants of righteousness : They now all act for God, and lest they should sin, there is a watch (*Psal. xxxix. 1.*) set over the door of the lips ; and a covenant made with the eyes, *Job. xxxi. 1.* And so in proportion (the same reasons pleading for it) with all the other members of the body. Thus the nature is sanctified, and
Z becometh

becometh truly holy. Now the man is indeed a new creature, *2 Cor. v. 17. Old things are passed away, and all things are become new.*

The next branch of this true holiness, requisite to salvation, is a holy frame : Accordingly, we find the holy Ghost positive, that *to be carnally minded is death : but to be spiritually minded is life and peace, Rom. viii. 6.*

In speaking of the frame of a gracious soul, it may be considered as two fold ; either *first*, as it respecteth the constant, habitual set and disposition of the renewed soul, (so far as renewed) according to which, the soul acteth, as the moral, religious principle of all our actions. Or *2dly*. As it respecteth ; those variable gracious impressions, and elevations of soul, which rise and fall, according to the degree of the spirits actual influences, upon either one, more or all of the graces, which are habitually in the soul, *Song. i. 4, and 16.*

If we consider the frame of the soul in the first sense, then the holiness thereof consisteth in the spirituality and rectitude of the soul's principles, motives and ends ; which influence the conversation. So that where the frame of the soul is truly holy, these three are certainly to be found with it. First, love to God in Christ, is really the first and great spring of all its obedience. The love of God manifested in creating and redeeming goodness, begetting love in the holy soul constraineth (*2. Cor. v. 14*) to live to God, in a course of holy obedience. And though in engaging with every duty, they are not so sensible of this pleasant constraint, yet upon search, it shall be found, that *Joseph's* filial, grateful respect to God, *Gen. xxxix 9.* is in less or more at the bottom of the obedience of every gracious person. And that it is not more, is really the grief of their souls, *Song. i. 4.*

Again

Again, 2dly. The great and last end of their conversation, is truly the glory of God. For considering the nature of the foresaid principle, the end cannot be otherways. Accordingly, the gracious soul obeyeth, to declare God to be supreme, and his law to be just, holy and good. They desire light, to know, how to glorify him, and grace to walk up unto light, *Psal.* cxix. 33. 34. 35. In their more stated and important actions, they formally aim at his glory, *Psal.* cxxxii. 1. 2. 3. And in their more ordinary and occasional, they really aim at the same end. So that even in their natural and civil actions, they do in the issue and product of them, really intend the glory of God : using the necessaries and comforts of life, and doing business, that may be in capacity for other duties and performances, tending more immediately to that end. Briefly, Thus we are required (1 *Cor.* x. 30.) and thus a holy frame of soul, will dispose us unto : Accordingly, holy *David* declareth that he set the Lord always before him, *Psal.* xvi. 8.

Thirdly, The motives also, giving life to our obedience, must be right ; before the frame of the soul can be said to be holy. The approving ourselves to God, and the laying ourselves open unto more conformity unto him, and communion with him, will be the principal moving considerations, in our obedience. And where the foresaid great principle and end are predominant ; infallibly these subordinate desires and aims will give life unto the soul, in the course of its obedience. Accordingly, we find, that the feeling more of the sanctifying conforming power of grace, and the seeing more of the divine glory, in clearer and fuller discoveries of God in Christ ; in his glorious perfections, and in the gracious properties and purposes of the divine love, are the grand motives (*Psal.* lxxiii. 1. 2. 3.) of the godly's attending

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ing, and using the means of grace : And as for the other parts of their conversation, whether natural or civil ; the great motive of their obedience, is, that they may be approved and accepted of God. *Cor. v. 9.*

But again, if we consider the frame of the soul in the second sense, then the holiness of it, appeareth according to the nature of the grace or graces which are most actuated by the holy Ghost. Hence sometimes a contrite, mourning frame of spirit for sin is predominant ; repentance being the grace, principally blown upon. Thus it was with *David*, *Psal. li.* Again at other times a panting longing frame of soul for God, and much of God, even for more conformity to him, and communion with him ; the soul for the time being under some clear discoveries of his excellent glory, and of the solid transcendent worth of those spiritual blessings ; which discovery influenceth the grace of love, unto a high degree, *Psal. lxii. 1. 2. Song. viii. 6. 7.*

Briefly, If there be a considerable gale of the north and south wind, blowing upon the believers garden, then behold, distinct, holy thoughts of God ; high and honourable thoughts of the Lord Christ ; generous offers of ourselves and of our all unto him ; great complacency and liveliness in duty : great tenderness of conscience ; and zealous purposes for the divine glory : All these, I say, as so many pleasant heavenly ingredients, compose and make up the frame and exercise of the soul, *Song. iv. 16.* As on the other hand, if the spirit be restrained from on high, then the habits of grace, as so many deep and cold winter roots, no ways appearing, is the sum of all the pleasant fruits, the soul can entertain its beloved with. Only the heart a little waketh, and that is all, *Song. v. 2.* And in point of holy duties, the soul now driveth most heavily, like unto a chariot, whose wheels are knocked off, *Psal. cxix. 32.* We come now to,

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The *Third* and last branch of this true holiness, under discourse, which is, that of a holy walk and conversation. And here indeed is the good old way, unto the kingdom, in which all the redeemed of the Lord, must of necessity walk. Accordingly, the divine oracles, are plain and positive, that *without holiness, no man shall see God*, Heb. xii. 14. And that *blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right unto the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates, into the city*, Rev. xxii 14.

This practical holiness, is a large subject, as it respecteth the natural, civil and religious conversation: However, considering what hath been already said, upon the two former heads, of a holy nature and frame, I conceive there is not so great need, for enlarging upon this. For, where the former two are, this *third*, will certainly be the person's serious aim and endeavour.

However to clear it a little, if we consider a holy walk complexly, as to its general import; we shall find from scripture, these three or four performances, to be requisite unto it. As *First*, There must be a cordial choosing of the whole law of God, for the rule, of the whole of our conversation even of all our thoughts, words and actions, 1 *Pet.* i. 15. And where this choice is genuine and solid, as it ariseth from love and respect unto the holy, wise and gracious law-giver; and there upon from a delight in the law itself, as holy just and good; *Rom.* vii 21. So also, it is attended always with a sincere hatred of all known sin, and sincere purposes, with respect to all known duties: So that neither, is the most beloved sin spared or reserved, nor the strictest precept, rejected or excepted. These two are indeed most important, and searching scriptures; but of necessity, they must be the real language of our hearts and lives, if ever we

resolve upon sincere and acceptable holiness. The first is,—*Thy word is very pure, and therefore thy servant loveth it, Psal. cxix. 140.* The other is in the 128th verse of the same psalm; *therefore I esteem all thy precepts, concerning all things to be right: And I hate every false way.*

Here is indeed the ballance of the sanctuary, which will infallibly determine our sincerity in holiness, at the long run, *Psal. cxxxix. 24.* And therefore, nothing can be more our interest, than to make sure, that no cursed FLY, of some KNOWN, BELOVED and ALLOWED sin, spoil all our precious religious ointment. For, the thrice holy God holding this ballance in his hand, and the heart-searching eye, observing accurately the scale; it is simply impossible, that the closest hypocrite can shun, being found light in that great day, *Matt. xxv. 11. 12.* And therefore,

Before, I leave this most concerning point (the grand requisite of sincerity in religion) I cannot omit, but in the name of God, to demand of thy conscience, O Reader, (in case thou should yet be a dissembler with God, and thy heart not yet found in the way of his statutes) what can thy beloved sin be? which marreth soundness in covenanting with Christ, and spoileth sincerity, in the whole of thy obedience. Can it hide thee from the omniscient eye? Or can it save thee from the King of terrors? Or cause thee to live forever? Can it seal thy grave, or shut thy ear against the trump of God? Or can it *tush* at the great white throne in the clouds? Or silence the supreme Judge sitting thereupon? Can it bind the bands of the mighty executioners? Or bolt the doors of the place of torment? Pray allow solid reason, to discourse thee a little upon this important head. Can this beloved sin of thine, be any thing that is equal to God; the fountain of all being and perfection?

Or

Or can it be preferable to peace and pardon, grace and glory ? I ask thee seriously ; Can thy conscience s^rve thee to say, that thou wilt in very deed, in the morning of the resurrection, prefer this beloved idol of thine. (whatever possibly it may be) unto a reconciled God ; unto heaven, and an eternity thereof ?

Or must not reason acknowledge, that one smile in that day, from the great supreme Judge, will infallibly darken all the happiness, that ever worldly, graceless men enjoyed, during the whole course of their life, O therefore be perswaded to keep clear of all known sinful reserves, in thy engaging with Christ, as thy Lord, and his law, as the rule of thy life. And let a heart-searching God, be witness unto thy soul's pronouncing a cordial *Amen*, unto all his commandments : And then thou shalt never be ashamed, with the shameful challenges, and confounding disappointments of the hypocrite, *Psal. cxix. 6* Whereas on the other hand, if thou shalt continue, in the love and practice of any one known sin ; I can assure thee in the name of God, that this one thing, will infallibly separate thee, and true holiness in this life ; and as certainly, Christ and thee, in that which is to come, *Mark x. 21.*

The second performance, requisite to a holy walk, is serious consideration ; not only upon the more manifest personal duties of religion : But also upon the relative, which God hath annexed, unto the particular station, in which his providence hath placed us in the world. And thus the sincere christian doth not, meerly to encrease his head knowledge ; but seriously in the fear of God, meditateth upon the divine law, endeavouring to learn and collect from it ; what are really the secret, private, and public duties ; what are

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the more ordinary and extraordinary ; stated or occasional, which God requireth of him : And all this he doth with a sincere intention, to walk up unto light, in all well pleasing before God. And wherein he is ignorant, or in suspense, supplicateth earnestly, for further instruction : Thus holy *David* *hid God's word in his heart, that he might not sin against him, Psal. cxix. 11. And set all God's judgments before him, that he might not depart wickedly from his God, Psal. xviii. 21. 22.* Briefly, to know duty in every turning and winding of the conversation ; to understand, wherein close walking with God consisteth, and to be helped by grace, to carry accordingly : All these things afford serious thoughts unto the sincere Christian ; so that they are a great part of the prayers of every soul, acquainted with true holiness in conversation. And well do such understand, the great import of that massy petition of old, *Psal. cxix. 5. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes.*

The third and principal performance, towards holy walking before God, is not only, as hath been already declared, to choose the law of God, for our rule : And to consider the several duties personal and relative, which the said law affixeth to us, as our part of religious obedience : But also above all, conscientiously and practically, to walk, up to our light. Accordingly, our Lord hath left it most plainly upon record, that it is not the hearing, but the doing of his words, that is necessary unto salvation, *Luke vi. 47. 48.* Meer knowledge or speculation, in religion, without practice, is almost the greatest provocations the deity meets with from the children of men, *Luke xii. 47.*

This conscientious practical endeavour to walk up unto light ; consisteth *first*, in our being punctual, in the performance of the matter of duties : So that the practical christian alloweth not him-
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self in any known omissions that way; but is active and diligent; aiming at least at the due season, matter and number of known duties, personal and relative; as they fall in through the day, one after another. And this course he continueth in, under the several changes, which may come upon the frame of the soul, in point of greater or lesser enlargement of liveliness in his performance of the foresaid duties. Thus *David* observed duty in the morning, at noon and at evening, *Psal.* lv. 17. 2dly, It principally consisteth in the christian's stirring up himself, with respect unto the right manner of performing duty: Endeavouring not only sincerity, in respect of principle, motives and ends but also much of spirituality and liveliness, during the religious performance. So that the holy practical christian, in the duties of worship and means of grace; such as reading, hearing, prayer, endeavoureth presence of mind, suitable impressions of God, and of divine truths, godly sorrow in his confessions, fervency in his desires and supplications, love, and gratitude in his acknowledgments of mercies; and so on, according to the nature of the duty, he is engaged in.

Thus at times, the christian can say in duty, *that his soul followeth hard out after God; Psal.* lxiv. 8. Yea, (though it be rare) yet blessed be God, that there are some special hours and days, in which, upon the account of great spirituality and liveliness, there is solid ground to cry out, concerning the holy soul,—*who is this, that cometh out of the wilderness, like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrhe and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant, Song* iii. 6. And if the christian come short of these attaining only (to his apprehension) unto the matter of duty, he is thereupon exceedingly grieved, and greatly displeased with his own wandering dead and cold heart, that
will

will not serve a holy and living God, more, in spirit and in truth : Sending up heavy complaints and cries, that God would—*Draw him, Song i. 4. and quicken him, Psal. cxix. 37.*

And again, as to the natural and civil actions, the practical holy soul, endeavoureth to run these also, in a religious channel ; acting the christian in every thing ; making great conscience of moderation, in all his lawful enjoyments, and of great ingenuity and uprightness, in all his words and dealings with his neighbour. Thus holy *Samuel* and *Job* of old, walked so punctually this way, that they were able to defy the world, to blot them in this matter ; 1 *Sam. xii. 2 3* and *Job xxxi.* A context of holy writ, for practical uprightness and righteousness, justly deserving frequent consideration.

The fourth and last performance, in this holy walking, is a daily serious mourning for short-comings and transgressions, together with a flying unto the blood of sprinkling, for pardoning mercy and soul restoring grace, *Rom. vii. 24.* This, I annex unto this head of holy walking, because it not only evidenceth a willing mind, towards perfect obedience ; but also argueth a serious endeavour towards growth in grace, and advancement in practical godliness.

That there will be manifold short-comings in our obedience, both as to the matter and manner thereof ; As also sinful mixtures, in our most holy and lively frames and performances if compared with the perfection of the law : Yea, that there may be very gross backslidings and breaches of vows with holy persons, is but too evident from scripture and experience ; to be denied. But nevertheless, the walk still continueth to be holy, upon the account of the foresaid performances, to wit, the persons chusing cordially the law of God,
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for the rule of their conversation; There considering seriously, upon the personal and relative duties required of them, by the said law. Together with their conscientious practical endeavours, to perform the fore-said duties, both as to matter and manner: And finally, their serious mourning for all their sinful failures; making use by faith, of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the healing of all their backslidings.

Briefly, where the first three of these are to be found with a person, and perseverance therein, together with a daily serious mourning for the remains of indwelling sin; the deadness of the frame, in holy duties; barrenness under the means of grace; and for the sinful daily escapes in thoughts, words and actions, as they come to be notified by conscience; and thereupon a frequent application made to the Lord Jesus Christ, for continued justification, and progressive sanctification; and all this gradually attended, with more of tenderness of conscience, and circumspection of walk in time coming: I say, where all these do concur, God himself in his word, does fully allow such a soul, not only to believe their sincerity in religion and holiness; but also to persuade themselves, of a special standing covenant relation betwixt him and them; and that they are (notwithstanding of all their imperfections and infirmities) most lovely through Jesus Christ, in his sight.

O Remarkable words, never enough observed and admired, *Song vi. 13.* In which we have the adorable holy trinity, importuning and calling upon, the backsliden believer,—*return, return, O Shulamite, return return, that we may look upon thee.* And this, even when the christian, upon the account of sinfulness and unworthiness, hath great ground to cry out, with astonishment,—*And what will ye see in the Shulamite?* To which God replieth, —*As it were, the company of two armies.*

Astonishing

Astonishing condescending grace ! In fine, believers sincere strong cries, for the death of sin, and earnest pantings and longings, for the perfections of grace, go exceeding far with a gracious God. And thus now, we have heard explained and declared the *three great Pre-requisites*, or terms of the covenant of grace, necessary to salvation, to wit, faith, repentance and true holiness.

The conclusion of all is ; There is abundance of mercy with God, to pardon the guiltiest sinner, and a superabundance of grace, to sanctify the most corrupt among men, and there is no less a fulness of merit, in the Lord Jesus Christ, to procure both unto us : But still as true it is, that, the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom redemption work was so costly, will never bestow grace and glory, the purchase of his precious blood, upon any stupid indifferent sinner ; knowing neither the want nor worth of the great salvation, nor in earnest thirsting for the same : And therefore every soul must solidly believe its natural sinfulness, misery and impotency ; and thereupon highly esteem, desire and choose a whole Christ, in all his offices, or be undone for ever, *Mark xvi. 16.* Nor can it ever be expected, that the divine majesty, will ever allow the divine mercy to pardon any proud, obstinate and unhumbled rebel ; And therefore of necessity, we must truly repent, or infallibly perish, *Luke xiii. 3.* Again, neither can it ever in reason be thought, that God, who is essentially and necessarily holy, can ever approve of, or take complacency in an unregenerate unholy person. The nature is the man, and therefore of necessity we must know, love and hate according to the deity ; or it is impossible, his heart can be towards us. God must cease to love himself that hour his eyes can behold iniquity, *Hab. i. 13.*

In short, final impenitency and unbelief, despising the mercy and merits of the Lord Jesus Christ, does so effectually oblige divine justice to proceed against the sinner, as a guilty corrupt branch of the first Adam, according to the curse of the covenant of works, that all the blood of the glorious redeemer, and travel of his soul, together with the satisfaction and intercession, founded thereupon, shall be entirely and eternally lost, as to the person's salvation. Yea, the wilful contempt of such a remedy, and neglect of so great a salvation, must inevitably infer the inconceivable addition of gospel vengeance; and that over and above, all the dreadful wrath, the broken law can charge upon the head of the guilty sinner, who hath not fled unto the gracious saviour. He that will not glorify mercy, by accepting its full and free offers: Reason itself, cannot but eternally condemn over, to the glory of the power and severity of justice; so that final impenitency and unbelief, are indeed the unpardonable sins; which sealeth the sinners condemnation, and bindeth fast upon the soul, the whole mass and burden of its preceeding original sin, and numberless actual transgressions.

Accordingly, the Apostles words, on this head, *Heb. x. 26, 27, 28*; are so very weighty and emphatical, as might justly make the stoutest hearted sinner to tremble: Declaring, that he that despised Moses law, died without mercy, under two or three witnesses: And then inferreth, *verse 29.* *of how much sorer punishment, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of Grace.* Reader, I appeal to thy conscience, what will the eternal experience of these truths be? Thou hast now
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read them ; And therefore, as thou lovest thy immortal soul, ponder them so, as thou mayest never feel them.

C H A P T E R XVI.

Nothing remaineth now, but the fourth and last mean, for the final accomplishment of all the parts of the eternal plat-form : And that is our Lord's second coming, at the last day, unto judgment. He cometh thus, for four great ends.

- 1. To clear the lower world from sin, and to free the groaning creature from vanity. The state both of persons and things, immediately preceeding our Lord's glorious appearance, call aloud for his coming. Satan and sin, having so fouled and blackned the lower world, it must be put in the furnace, that so a new heaven and a new earth may come forth. The 2d. great end, is, that every eye may see him ; and particularly, they that pierced him. Several reasons plead for this, but especially, that thereby, that great day of the Lord may prove a compleat and glorious reverse of the day of his crucifixion. The 3d. great end is, to accomplish the resurrection of the dead, and more especially the resurrection of the bodies of the redeemed. The glorious change, to be wrought upon the bodies of believers, by the foresaid resurrection. A rational account, of the possibility of it. Finally, Our Lord comes to act the part of the supreme and righteous judge of all the earth. His great abilities for, and just claims unto that high character and great trust, considered and declared:*

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Together with his most just procedure in the judgment, both with respect to angels and men heaven and hell both (though by very different notes) must eternally conspire, to proclaim the glory of the divine perfections. To consummate all, the redeemed shall enter the palace of the King, with inconceivable joy, order and state. A view of the great glory and happiness of the triumphant state, in proportion unto the enlarged powers and capacities of the redeemed. And thus, The changeable scene, of time, altering persons and things almost every hour, shall give way unto an invariable eternal state of angels and men. And so the everlasting sabbath shall commence, in which the deity shall rest from all his works of creation and redemption, and see all very good. To this God and the lamb, be all the glory of the all-wise contrivance, and almighty execution of the eternal plan, so worthy of a deity.

NOTHING now remains towards discoursing of the whole eternal plan, but to consider the fourth and last mean, for accomplishing finally the gracious purposes of this everlasting covenant of grace, and perfecting all the parts of the eternal project; and that is, our Lord's second coming, at the last day, unto judgment. Our Lord having accomplished the whole decrees, adjusted to time, from the creation of the world, to that great day; and by the fulfilment of the two covenants, having paved the way, for the eternal glory of divine justice and mercy: He at last will rent the heavens, and come down in his father's glory, with all the only angels, appearing manifestly to all, to be the great God, as well as his people's Saviour, *Tit. ii. 13.*

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And therefore, to make some rational account of this great and last dispensation, please to consider, that he comes thus for four great ends. first, to clear the lower world from sin, and to free the groaning creature from vanity. God having born long with sinning angels and men, and having for holy and wise ends, towards the accomplishing of his manifold decrees, allowed the region of the air, and the high places therein, unto the apostate angels, giving them thereby no small advantage over men, and their zitions, done under their view : And having also, allowed sinful men the earth here below, to live and act in, till all the decreed generations of mankind, together with all the temporal events, relative to each of them, should be accomplished ; he at last (to allude unto that expression) will send his angel, swearing by him, that liveth for ever, that *time shall be no more.*

And if we consider the state of persons and things, a little before our Lord's coming ; we shall find reason itself, pleading strongly for his solemn appearance unto judgment. For *Satan* and the wicked, having been much bound up, for a thousand years before, they shall thereupon, like an impetuous long restrained torrent, cause sin and wickedness to overflow all boundaries whatsoever. And *Satan* knowing his time to be but short, shall thereupon undoubtedly double his activity and fury, along with his mighty armies of *Gog* and *Magog*, against the church, and all her concerns. Accordingly, our Lord is plain, *Luke xvii. 26---30.* That the world shall be immersed in sensuality of all kinds, contempt of God and all religion, in the last days.

Briefly, the church being brought exceeding low, and *Gog* and *Magog* become exceeding numerous, mighty and violent, rendering the life and
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lot of the godly, a burden and weariness unto them, upon the earth, *Rev. xx. 8. 9.* And finally all flesh having corrupted their way; the inanimate creation only serving the rational, to rebel against their maker. The heavens allowing their influences; and the sun, as it were only shining to prepare for, and to behold the great wickedness of the children of men. The earth only bearing and nourishing its inhabitants, to perpetrate the greatest of villanies, and to spue out their enmity and venom against the world's maker and preserver: I say, when matters comes to be thus stated, that neither the animate nor inanimate creation, are answering their original designs and ends, for which their glorious and wise creator erected them; but going directly cross unto the same: Can reason itself? Forbear any longer to cry out, for the day, of *the restitution of all things; Acts iii. 21.*

Or can reason be so cruel, as to desire, the outwearied inanimate creature, who hath groaned so many thousand years, by reason of disorder, vanity and heavy labour (the effects of man's sin) to continue any longer, under that sore yoke? What a hard master and lord, hath sinful man been, unto his inferior fellow creatures, since the day in which he forced the earth, to convert its natural harvests, into cursed briars and thorns; and thereby obliging many thousands of excellent, stately, beautiful creatures, to deform and destroy themselves; groaning under fatiguing yokes, and crushing loads and burdens: Who otherways would have been the glory of the valley, and the stately rangers of the mountains. Can any person then refuse such obedient laborious servants, their long looked for *Jubilee, Rom. viii. 21, 22.*

Again, When satan and men by sin, hath so fouled and blackned the glorious workmanship of the deity's pure fingers: The devil having made

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the air a region of hellish contrivances and conspiracies, and a fatal magazine of thousands of dreadful storms ; *J. b* i 19. And men having made the earth a scene of all abominations ; must not reason own, that it is high time for such a corrupt mass to be put in the furnace, to be cleared of its dross, that so the elements melting with a fervent heat, and the earth and the works thereof, being set on fire, *2 Pet.* iii. 12. a glorious new heavens and new earth ; bearing proportion to the perfections of their maker and restorer, may come forth and endure for ever. And thus our Lord, who was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, (as by him the worlds were made at first, so he,) shall at his second coming, by the restitution of all things, mock at all the mischief and harm, which the old serpent thought, he had (in affront unto the creator) brought upon the lower world. And thus we have heard of the first end of our Lord's second coming.

The second is ; That all the world, even every eye may see him, *Rev* i. 7. And that it should be so, four reasons plead strongly: For 1. Few nations, if any at all. but what have, either directly, by divine declaration, or indirectly, by report and tradition, heard or will hear in less or in more of him ; to wit, of there being such a person, as the Lord Jesus Christ, termed by christians the Saviour of the world. *Mahomet* himself taught and allowed his followers (who possess a great part of the known world) to own our Lord as a great prophet and extraordinary person in his day. Yea, the *Persians*, *Chinese* and *Indians*, are not altogether without some traditions and prophecies (though confused) looking this way : which probably hath spread from one place to another among them ; and of late hath no doubt been enlarged and confirmed from the informations given them,
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by the missionaries of the church of *Rome*, concerning the christian faith. And therefore the whole of mankind, generally speaking, having thus heard of him, as the most extraordinary person, that ever the lower world contained ; it is most proper, that in that great day, he should be openly seen, by all the race of Adam, that so the general report of him, through the world, may be evinced, to have been no imposture, but one of the greatest truths amongst men.

Again *2dly*. All the world must see him, that all such of mankind, (who having lived without the church,) never had any other knowledge of him but only dark remains of a deity, and some dim views of his creating perfections, with some faint inscriptions of the moral law ; together with a rumor of his good-will towards men, may at that day, see him clearly ; and thereupon believe, that these natural impressions of his being, perfections and law, were not vain imaginations, but really written by the almighty creating finger ; and that all the transgressions done against the light of a natural conscience, were really sins, truly deserving death. And thus Atheism, that monstrous reverse of all religion, shall never have being any more among men, in time nor eternity ; but quite vanish and die out, upon this second and glorious appearance of our Lord, in that great day.

Thirdly, Our Lord must thus appear visibly before all the world, in the greatest glory, as a just and wise reverse of the day of his crucifixion ; and as a recompence for all the reproach, shame and contempt, which he met with in this lower world among men. He suffered openly, without the gates of *Jerusalem*, upon Mount *Calvary*, before some of all nations, who were upon different occasions come heither ; And therefore it is but just, that as he was made so public, in the lowest and most

disgracing steps of his humiliation ; that so he should be equally public in his glorious exaltation. Accordingly, this I take, to be the principal import, and emphasis, of these remarkable words ; *Rev. i. 7 — Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him ;* to which it is immediately added ; — *And they also, which pierced him.*

Briefly, *Judas* must see him in his glory, and be ashamed of the price of thirty pieces, for him who shall be seen in that day, to be God over all, blessed for ever. The false witnesses must also behold him, and be confounded for their horrid perjury. *Pilate* must likewise behold him, on the throne, and see him not only King of the *Jews*, but of the *Romans* also ; as having the greatest *Cæsars*, panned before him ; and thereupon, (believe not his wife's dream only) but his own eyes in that day : and no more fondly suppose, that the washing of his hands, will clear him from the horrid guilt of condemning such innocent and precious blood. The Centurion also, with the *Roman* band, must behold their old prisoner, in that day, become the King of Kings, and having all the mighty hosts of heaven at his command ; by which they shall then understand, the true reason of some of the company falling to the ground, in the garden, when our Lord did but say, that he was the man, *John xviii. 6.* They must also see the crown of thorns, converted into laurels, of the greatest power and glory, and the two malefactors exchanged with glorious Angels and Arch-angels on every side. They must also see the cross, become a glorious throne, surrounded with the greatest dread and majesty.

Again the wicked *Jews*, must also witness this great day, that they may have access a second time, to compare our Lord and *Barabbas* together ;
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and to see, if now they be as fond as of old, to have his blood upon them and their children ; and if they would now allow it to be written (without any correcting addition) this is the King of the *Jews*. In fine, as the day of his crucifixion ended with his death and burial, in which the devil, wicked men, and the grave, did all openly, (in the world's account) triumph over him and his church : So now to compleat the reverse of that day, the solemnity of his second appearance, must be shut up with the most glorious inconceivable triumph over all his and his people's inveterate enemies : Our Lord trampling them under his feet, and sinking them into the lowest hell ; and thereupon ascending with his people, as so many glorious conquerors, passing through the triumphant arches of the new *Jerusalem*, *Psal.* xlv. 14, 15.

Fourthly, He must thus openly appear, in that day that all despisers of him, and of the tenders of his grace, upon their beholding his incomparable glory and worth, and his admirable peculiar love to mankind above the fallen angels ; (displaying it self that morning most illustriously, in the visible hypostatical union) their consciences may begin and pave the way for justice's condemning sentence against them, and that before ever, the glorious judge, proclaim the same from the throne.

And then lastly, He must thus appear, that all those who loved him in sincerity (not having seen him) may no more have an unseen Christ to love, but may at that day, be confirmed, that their choice was good, transcending greatly their expectation ; And that their love was solid and well grounded, and that they were no ways mistaken, in accounting him, the pearl of great price, the chiefest among ten thousands ; and one altogether

lovely. Briefly, faith having been long tried, must at length be rewarded with immediate vision, 1 *John* iii. 2, 3. By all which we may clearly see, the reasons of our Lord's being seen by every eye among mankind, in that great day; though the redeemer only of some, out of all nations.

The third great end, for which our Lord cometh at the last day, is to accomplish the resurrection of the dead, and especially the glorious resurrection of the bodies of the redeemed people: which he is to perform by an almighty power and virtue flowing from him, as their living head; who was dead, but is now alive. He dying in their room, rose also as their head, and therefore, by his resurrection, broke all the gates and bars of that prison, *Rom.* iv. 25. By this resurrection, the redeemed bodies of the elect, being united to their perfect and glorified souls, shall not only be clothed with great visible glory, shining as the sun in the firmament, *Matth.* xiii. 43. But shall also be perfectly adjusted in their qualities and powers, unto the spiritual exercises, and heavenly enjoyments of the church triumphant; so that the body shall not in the least, clog or retard the mind, in its perfect contemplations, nor the will in its perfect enjoyments, nor the affections in their regular and highly elevated motions, 1 *Cor.* xv. from the 42, unto the 45.

With respect to this resurrection of the bodies of the godly, the apostle sheweth us a mystery, to wit, That the elect of God alive at that day *shall not sleep, but in the twinkling of an eye be changed*: 1 *Cor.* xv. 51, 52. The Almighty divine power that knoweth no lets, nor needeth any progress of time, shall *Enos* and *Elijah* like, of a sudden change, and prepare them for the higher house. And all this to proclaim, that natural death, as consisting in a separation of the soul from the body, and the
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body's interment in the dust, is not a mean absolutely necessary in order unto redemption, otherwise all must have undergone it, expressly contrary unto 1 *Cor.* xv. 51. So that *Abel* and all the Godly since that time, their lying so long in the dust, was wisely ordained, more for the glory of the divine faithfulness and power in accomplishing their resurrection (*Phil.* iii. 21.) and to give time for the natural and spiritual birth of their brethren, the unborn elect of God ; than upon the account of any intrinsic necessity, in the dispensation itself. So that all the godly may solidly believe, what was said of *Lazarus* sickness of old.—That their dissolution, is not so much unto death, as for the glory of God ; death not being the final nor principal end thereof.

Briefly, the glorious redeemer, being now ready to compleat, all his meditative administrations, and to deliver up the kingdom unto the father (1 *Cor.* xv. 24.) making account of the progress and perfection thereof unto him : The wheels of providence must therefore, now, move very swiftly, accomplishing great dispensations at once ; A new and more glorious second creation being upon the anvil. Accordingly, great are the performances to be done in that day ; The resurrection of the dead ; the gathering all mankind, from all the four corners of the earth : The necessary preparations of the godly for heaven, and of the wicked for hell : The putting of the elements, the earth and works thereof into the furnace of the general conflagration ; And thereafter bringing out a new heaven and a new earth ; not to speak of the solemn procedure of the judgment ; are all, such glorious dispensations, as evidently proclaim, great work to providence in that solemn day ; and also forbids all foolish uncertain determinations, as to the nature and duration thereof. Its true indeed,

after all, it must be acknowledged, that such persons, as will needs be so long at purgatory, before they can enter heaven, seem to be at a very great loss, if they die not some considerable time, before the approach of this great and last day.

As to the possibility of the resurrection of the dead, solid reason cannot possibly make any objection; considering that all must own, that an omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent God, can certainly most easily gather together the smallest scattered atoms or particles, however far dispersed from one another amongst the different elements. Even the martyrs fire, the most devouring element, can only dissolve the order, or regular union of the more integral parts, but can never annihilate any of them, turning them into nothing: And therefore seeing the substance of all the parts still existeth, whether in the water, or in the earth, it is evident, that the omniscient, omnipresent eye, joined with the almighty creating hand, which at first called them out of nothing, can far more easily collect and set them in order again.

And as for the glorious qualities and powers which the bodies of the redeemed, are to be endued with, at that day, it is no less evident, that he who could unite the human nature hypostatically unto the divine, in the person of the glorious head, can certainly far more easily, adjust the perfections and powers of the bodies of the members, unto the finite (however enlarged) capacities of the soul; and proportion the powers of both, unto the highest exercises and great enjoyments of heaven. For, certainly the power framing the glorious sun, may easily produce the sparkling stars

Briefly, considering, that the glory of the man *Christ*, shall in that day, (though still finite and limited) bear such proportion, unto the divine nature, and the glory thereof, that as he shall be
known

known and appear to be our Saviour ; so he shall also at the same time, be seen to be none less in person, than the great God, *Tit. ii. 13.* I say, considering this, what possible difficulty can reason solidly alledge, against the greatest capacities, powers and glory, being bestowed upon the members of this glorious head, *Phil. iii. 21.* allowing still the due proportion of head and members to be observed.

Our Lord, shall also at that great day, by his almighty power set on work by justice, raise the bodies of the wicked ; as so many guilty malefactors out of prison, that so all mankind, may appear before the great white throne, *Rev. xx. 11. 12. 13.*

Fourthly. Our Lord comes to act the part of the supreme and righteous Judge of all the earth, yea and of Angels too, *1 Cor. vi. 3. Acts x. 42.* And to this high character and trust, he hath a five-fold claim. As *first*, being he by whom the worlds, both higher and lower were made, with all the Angels and children of men therein ; it is highly reasonable, that all mankind, together with the sinning Angels, should appear before his judgment seat ; thereby proclaiming him the supreme God, and author of their being, to whom by the law of nature and creation, they are accountable. Again *2dly*, Our Lord having been from all eternity, acquainted with the special decrees, relative to mankind ; knowing particularly, whose names are in the book of life, and who not : As also knowing the elect Angels from those who apostatized, *Rev. xx. 12. 1 Tim. v. 21.* I say, our Lord being thus perfectly acquainted with these things ; there is none can be more fitted for making the eternal disposal both of Angels and men, than what he must be. And then *3dly*. Being also omniscient, and of infinite understanding, having all things naked and open before him, even the most secret, wicked

wicked or gracious motions, turnings and windings of the heart ; and being perfectly acquainted, with the true principles, motives and ends of all human actions, he must thereupon know, how to render to every man, according to his works, and that without any mistake, in relation to the same. — More especially considering, that when the books come to be opened, *Rev. xx. 12.* the book of divine omniscience, will certainly render the book of conscience infallible.

Again *4thly*, Our Lord being infinitely and essentially just and righteous, it is impossible, he can in the least wrong, either the meanest among the truly godly, by neglecting their inherent, or forgetting their imputed righteousness ; or the grossest among the wicked, by overstretching judgment against them : For, being the infinitely holy independent God, neither respect of persons, nor any mistake or extreme, can ever possibly be found with him. *2 Chron. xix. 7. Gen. xviii. 25.* And then *5thly*, Being God omnipotent in himself, and his hosts being thousands of Angels strong ; what power shall ever be able to hinder the execution of any sentence, that shall be pronounced by him, in that great day ? *Matth. xxv. 34. 41.*

Briefly, Our Lord being both creator and redeemer and as creator having bestowed a perfection of grace at first upon man, and since his fall, having allowed him space to repent, keeping up this great world, for his sake, and bestowing upon him, the manifold necessities and comforts of life ; and withal having given him, the eternal light and law of nature, even in the darkest corners of the earth, and having also externally spoken loudly, in his ears, by the remarkable works of creation and providence ; sometimes by terrible judgments, and at other times by alluring mercies ; but especially, having caused the glorious sun of the gospel, to
arise

arise upon most parts of the known world; and often subjoining therewith the common motions and strivings of his spirit, *Gen. vi. 3.* Who, I say, after all these things, can reasonably refuse our Lord the supreme judging and final determining power of the whole of mankind? That so all those, who distinctly heard God speak, not only from *Mount Sinai*, but also from *Mount Sion*, and yet remained obstinate and rebellious, may receive the punishment and vengeance, justly due from both. And on the other hand, that such who sinned both without the law and gospel may only be judged & treated accordingly, *Rom. ii. 12.* And finally that all believing penitent sinners, may, through Christ, receive in that day, the promised pardon of their sins, the perfect sanctification of their persons, and the everlasting kingdom, justly belonging unto them, through the inconceivable price of the obedience and blood of the Son of God.

As to the apostate Angels, they also originally received a great perfection of grace, and glory; and thereupon having sinned against the greatest light and goodness, without any temper, forbidden fruit, or insinuating relation: And further, they not resting contented with their own rebellion; but having also seduced and corrupted the whole of mankind: And to consummate all, having for several thousands of years, set up a kingdom in direct opposition, unto the kingdom of God, and his Christ: Who I say, considering these things, must not acknowledge, that such monstrous spirits, ought in that great day, before God, Angels and men, to be publicly judged, and with the greatest disgrace, sentenced and condemned by our Lord, for all the enmity, so long spued out, from the old serpent, against the seed of the woman; *Gen. iii. 15.* And finally, no wonder, if upon the sentence, all the redeemed company shall cry *Amen*, *1 Cor. vi. 3.* The

The judgment being thus far over ; there shall ensue the public acquittance of the godly, (upon the account of Christ's perfect satisfaction) to the eternal praise and glory, both of justice and mercy : And then that great scripture shall be gloriously fulfilled, *Job xxxiii. 24* *Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, deliver him, from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom.* Upon which shall follow next, the condemnation of the wicked, upon the account of their sin, and final impenitency therein, *Matth. xxv. 41.*

And thus sinful Angels and men, who would actively glorify God, and so answer the end of their creation, must for the glory of divine wisdom and power, passively accomplish the foresaid end, to the praise of glorious justice. That so heaven and hell, being both the workmanship of God, and containing his rational creatures in them, may jointly conspire (though by very different, notes) to extol through eternity, the glorious wisdom, power, justice and mercy of the deity : And then, that great sentence shall be accomplished, *Prov. xvi. 4.* to wit, that, *The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.*

And now to consummate all, the redeemed shall enter the palace of the King with inconceivable joy, order and state, *Psal. xlv. 14, 15.* The transcendent glory of their head, the wonderful glory of the Arch-angels and their fellows ; the shining glory of the redeemed company, rising as so many suns out of the earth : The mutual joy of JEHOVAH, in seeing his eternal counsels accomplished ; and of the mediator, in seeing the glorious birth of the travel of his soul ; and of the elect, in enjoying the glorious effects of both ; I say, considering all these together ; what finite mind, can possibly conceive or express the glory and joy of that day ?

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The redeemed having entered the city, with the twelve gates, of twelve pearls, and whose streets are of pure gold, and walls of precious stones : Who thereupon, can sufficiently unfold, the full import of their sitting down under the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, and beside the pure river like crystal, proceeding out of the throne) briefly, the mind, perfectly contemplating God, and the Lamb ; as seeing clearly in them, and their divine perfections, (as in their original causes) the whole works of creation, redemption and providence : And this clear and great discovery, obliging the most enlarged and extensive desires of the mind, to acknowledge, that here they find rest. And again, the will, upon this equally enjoying this God in Christ ; and that in a perfect sense of his love, evidenced by perfect conformity and communion ; and confirmed by a constant assurance of himself, and all his perfections being theirs, and for them for ever : I say, the soul thus perfectly contemplating and enjoying God in Christ, who can conceive the all of its happiness, joy and glory ? And thus the final accomplishment of the covenant of grace, shall infallibly oblige all the redeemed company with *David* of old, to cry out, to the eternal praise of an all-sufficient God.

—*This is my desire ; 2 Sam. xxiii, 5.*

And thus, the changeable scene of time, almost altering every hour, persons and things ; shall give way unto an invariable eternal state and condition of Angels and men, together with a new heavens and new earth, through all the endless ages of eternity : And then the everlasting sabbath shall begin, in which the deity shall indeed rest, from all his works of creation and redemption, and see all very good.

To this God and the lamb, be the glory of this sovereign and wise contrivance, and of the powerful

ful execution, of this eternal plan ; worthy of the deity, and of the divine perfections, to contrive and perform, and of Angels and men to admire and praise through eternity, *Rev. vii. 10.* — *And they cried with a loud voice, saying salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb. Amen and Amen.*

F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

Before the Reader peruses this Book ; he is requested to Correct with his Pen the following Errors of the Press.

E R R A T A in the D E D I C A T I O N.

P. 12, l. 3. For not refuted, r. refuted. P. 6. l. 5. For concious r. conscious, l. 2. for, propriety, r. propriety, l. 7. For blends, r. blinds. P. 14. l. 15. For these names, r. the name. P. 15. l. 5. For dependences, r. dependencies. P. 16, l. 5 from the bottom, for incorporal r. incorporeal.

First page in the List. For Deacon James, r. Samuel.

Preface, Page 5 l. 1st. For substance, r. subsistence. P. 14. l. 10. For substance, r. subsistence. P. 14, l. 22. for restoration, r. restoration. P. 22, l. 14 from the bottom, for else r. less. P. 30, l. 2. For hardness, r. hardiness, P. 33, l. 17. For at, r. that, p. 67. l. 5. For could not, r. could not but. P. 77. l. 10 from the bottom, for personally, r. personally. P. 77, l. 4 from the bottom, for jealousy, r. jealousy. P. 89, l. 3 from the bottom, for desposal, r. disposal. P. 111, l. 11. For it is, r. is it. P. 120, l. 13. For steps, r. steps. P. 120, l. 22. for adoreabale, r. adoreable. P. 120 l. 2 from

from the bottom, for subſtence, r. ſubſiſtance. P. 122, l. 8, for engrate, r. ungrateful. l. 17, for motions, r. motion. P. 124, l. 1, for requſite, r. requiſite. P. 125, l. 6 from the bottom, for King, r. Hing. P. 128, l. 1. For uſſering r. ſuffering, and for ſundergoing, r. undergoing. P. 139, l. 8. For perfectmy, r. perfecting. P. 144, l. 19. For which encounters, r. which he encounters. P. 145, l. 2 from the bottom for and r any. P. 153, l. 19. For tranſgreſſion r. tranſaction. l. 22, For tranſgreſſion r. tranſaction. P. 155, l. 10, from the bottom, for only, r. only one. P. 156, l. 11 from the bottom, for yea, r. ye. P. 178, l. 1 at the bottom, for bliſſings r. bleſſings. P. 181, l. 5 from the bottom, for abedience, r. obedience. P. 182, l. 14. For ſubtility, r. ſubtilty. P. 183, l. 2 from the bottom, for towards r. to-wards. P. 184, l. 6 from the bottom, for unrighoe-ous r. unrighteous, laſt line at the bottom, for nature r. nature. P. 185, l. 6. For lions, read loins. P. 189, l. 14 For vegetive r. vegetative. P. 207, l. 8. For worth, r. worthy. P. 236, l. 26. For indeliabie r. indelible. P. 257, l. 1. For Aaronic-
cle, r. Aaronical. P. 259, l. 23. For of place, r. of the place.



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